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SHOWMANSHIP IN BUSINESS

REVISED EDITION

KENNETH GOODE
and
ZENN KAUFMAN

HARPER & BROTHERS
NEW YORK AND LONDON

SHOWMANSHIP IN BUSINESS

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PREFACE FOR FUTURE EDITIONS

One could hardly dodge the implication that the invitation to write this Preface is an open acknowledgment of the spectacular showmanship concentrated in the New York World's Fair 1939. I appreciate this compliment, naturally, coming as it does from the authors of this book, and particularly since their work is a sixth edition, whereas our exposition is a first. I enjoy making this reciprocal acknowledgment to them, because their first five editions did much to pave the way for the New York World's Fair by creating a knowledge of, and an acceptance for, good showmanship among that most important group—our exhibitors.

As the authors point out in Chapter 9 (a new chapter added for this edition), "A fair . . . unlike a chain . . . *can* be stronger than its weakest link." And so, despite the possibility of an occasional lapse in showmanship, the New York World's Fair 1939 is bound for success. The writers, I hasten to add, have very accurately analyzed the factors that are already tending to make certain exhibits outstanding. Which are the outstanding exhibits? Why are they outstanding? How far can they and how far will they

steal the crowds from the less skillful showman? These are the questions whose answers you can watch for when you come to visit our New York World's Fair.

GROVER WHALEN
President
New York World's Fair 1939
Incorporated

New York City
March 16, 1939

FOREWORD

By Henry G. Weaver

Among American business men there are those who believe that showmanship is everything—and, on the other hand, there are those who believe, or pretend to believe, that showmanship has no place in business.

I have always taken pride in claiming to be in the latter group. Even the *Message to Garcia* left me a bit cold—that is, after my goose pimples had subsided and I found myself trying to rationalize the proposition:

"Was the message really so important after all?"

"If so, why such inadequate instructions?"

"Why couldn't the messenger have been given a little advice—a few suggestions—a bit of encouragement—perhaps even an unmilitary slap on the shoulder?"

This book appeals to me because it grants me the right to raise just such questions.

Here is an outstanding contribution to business literature. And in contrast to most books of its kind, *Showmanship in Business* will prove just as interesting to the executive who pays the bills as it will to the person specializing in showmanship. Neither will find much to argue about although both will find themselves swerved from their traditional concepts and

drawn into a common path of thought—a path which should lead to greater efficiencies in merchandising.

The authors have supplied in this book the missing link between the intuitive and the analytical. They have searched out the principle underlying the stunt. They have succeeded in rationalizing the irrational. And in the process they have cut so deeply under the subject that they have established a common denominator between the showmanship of Barnum, of Henry Mencken and of a Sears Roebuck catalogue.

Those who read with the idea of getting an encyclopedia of sales stunts and theatrical tricks will not be disappointed. But in digging out the ready-made applications they will find themselves drawn into a rational understanding of the subject which cannot fail to lift the effectiveness of showmanship as a selling aid.

The book takes showmanship apart and shows what makes it tick. It points out what showmanship won't do as well as what it will. It holds a post-mortem over that showmanship done merely for its own sake—of slapstick showmanship that diverts attention away from the proposition it is designed to promote. It drags into the open the bedraggled spectacle of forced-draft enthusiasm which passes for showmanship on the program of the annual convention, the civic parade or the luncheon club picnic.

And on the brighter side, it tells of showmanship that sets off the proposition with a finishing touch—comparable to the garnishment of porterhouse steak.

Particularly appealing to me is the paradoxical

idea that effective showmanship does not always mean something spectacular unless we concede that there is such a thing as spectacular simplicity.

Showmanship, as here dealt with, is a matter of dealing with people in a manner that is pleasing to them—or, as the authors have aptly expressed it:

"Finding out what people like—doing *more* of it.
Finding out what people don't like—doing *less* of it."

Showmanship implies an accurate appreciation of the other man's interest; and as a consequence, presenting one's own proposition in a skillfully colored adaptation to, or portrayal of, the other fellow's sense of values.

The book, within itself, is a fine example of showmanship—just as it is a fine example of scientific analysis applied to the emotional processes.

It would easily qualify as a profound scientific work—were it not for the fact that the authors (God bless them!) have refused to accept the dogma that dullness is an inherent ingredient of scientific chastity.

SHOWMANSHIP IN BUSINESS

1

THE SIMPLE FORMULA FOR SUCCESS

Success in business should be natural. Like health in men. Growth and profits should not depend on any series of novel sales stimulants. Or succession of ingenious advertising medicines. For success, whether of individual or organization, depends, after all, primarily upon:

1. Starting in the right direction
2. With indefatigable energy, getting constantly righter.

Man, as a unit of humanity, has one tremendous advantage over the businesses he creates. Nature allows man a comfortable convalescence from his own mistakes. Business is less beneficent. It tolerates no feebleness. Modern competition may, now and then, penalize a passive failure even more severely than a positive error. There's no neutral zone. Everything, down to the tiniest detail, must be done in a positively popular way. Every action not definitely right is definitely wrong, perhaps harmfully.

In even the most complicated business, then, suc-

cess may best be forwarded by two surprisingly simple principles:

1. Finding out what people like
2. Doing *more* of it.

These two imply two corollaries, almost equally important:

1. Finding out what people *don't* like
2. Doing *less* of it.

More simply than most of us realize, success in business depends on a man's ability—inherent or acquired—to operate on some such plan. To see his every proposition in the same light as will its prospective purchaser. Or, failing this, on his being able—less safely, perhaps; certainly more expensively—to persuade that prospective purchaser to view his proposition as he himself sees it.[1]

Benjamin Franklin once wrote that every man is actually three persons:

1. John Smith as his neighbor sees him
2. John Smith as he sees himself
3. John Smith as his Maker sees him.

In much the same way, every business proposition has always two actual aspects:

1. As its proposer sees it
2. As the rest of the world sees it.

[1] "Joe Cook once said, 'Of all my wife's relations, I like myself the best.' We believe that in this artless remark Joe summed up a fundamental and universal attitude that must be considered in planning all showmanship, professional or business." (*Profitable Showmanship*, by Goode & Kaufman.)

This indisputable fact makes us all salesmen every day. Salesmen, whether or no. Whether we seek to impose on others our merchandise, our energies, our ideas, or only our point of view, for better or worse, we become salesmen. And so, as this small book proposes to point out, showmen.

Gilbert K. Chesterton touched the edge of showmanship when he said:

"There is no such thing on earth as an uninteresting subject; the only thing that can exist is an uninterested person."

Mr. Chesterton might have added that not even an "uninterested person" could continue to exist were that person able always to keep the conversation around him wholly on his own projects.

At any rate, the lack of harmonious appraisal of interests that does exist between what other people *want* and what we think they *ought to want*—in other words, what *we* want them to want—is described by that interesting American conception, "sales resistance." And, for our purpose, the mere existence of such "resistance" might mark the difference between "showmanship" and "salesmanship." A proud disregard of the former and a delighted reliance upon the latter has wasted its billions for American business. Psychologically unfortunate, advertising for many years sought to impose its boasts of superiority upon a mass of people already struggling vainly to assert *their* superiority. Or, at least, to find an escape from their frustrations. Showmanship, headed in the opposite direction, seeks to help people escape this imposition—to make him feel superior.

"Salesmanship," necessarily, has much in common with "showmanship," as all sound selling has been developed along the same psychologically scientific lines. On the other hand, just as showmanship flourishes often without a suspicion of a sales hook, so selling succeeds without a trace of showmanship. The most effective advertising would attempt little more than to *transmit* applied showmanship on a large scale. Nevertheless, many advertisers, strangely enough, still seem somehow to regard advertising as a substitute for showmanship.

Not merely to cut the costs of selling, but to sell at all in coming days of fierce competition, everybody from president down to office boy may have to cooperate in putting on a good show. It is not alone that the cost of selling many sorts of goods is already from two to ten times the cost of making them; the corollary of that situation is even more unfortunate. Unimaginative unmodern selling is robbing the American public of its rightful share of the benefits of America's magnificently engineered mass production. As an *Advertising and Selling* article of Mr. Goode's states it:

> "In an astonishingly large number of cases, the cost of selling the last 25% of goods, containing the quantity profit, eats up the whole saving in its manufacture. And in astonishingly few cases, everything considered, is there any tremendous benefit passed on to the public in lower prices!"

No department in any business should, in these circumstances, be allowed to expend a dime's worth of money, or a dollar's worth of energy, without due

consideration for a corresponding advance in the *active* esteem of the greatest possible number of probable customers. With this rule alone, mediocre men have made spectacular successes. With everything but this rule, able men have achieved spectacular failure. Showmanship, under one name or another, is, in fact, found the great common denominator of success. Interpreted into "service," it may come to be as valuable in practice as it is correct in theory.

For showmanship, as we shall see, is the art of starting right with the rest of the world. And keeping right. Profitably right. Positively right. Spectacularly right, if you will. Because a concise definition cannot possibly include all its varied implications, showmanship is almost impossible to define. Showmanship is simultaneously both an active verb—and the object of that verb. Showmanship might be at least partially defined as an accurate appreciation of the *other* man's interest, whether dealing with individuals or crowds; and, as a consequence, either by plan or intuition, the presentation of one's own proposition in a skillfully colored adaptation to, or portrayal of, the other fellow's sense of values.

Showmanship, in short, is another name for "tact." Active, aggressive tact. Tact on a gorgeous scale. Tact blown up into a balloon. Painted like a barber pole!

On the other hand, showmanship does not mean being always spectacular. Showmanship is something considerably deeper than an eye for color, a lively

imagination and a flair for the picturesque. Successful showmanship, in fact, should begin with a critical and coldly extroversive state of mind. Simplicity is generally most effective. Where one brass band makes enough music, a dozen brass bands make confusion. An ambitious mail-order catalogue designer with an eye to the too spectacular might easily kill off a vast business overnight. The best showmanship in sales catalogue making is spectacular accuracy and ease of reading.

Not everyone, of course, is in the happy position of being able to get a quick miniature preview of the public's "reaction" to any given proposition. Good expert advice will prove most profitable. All of us can, nevertheless, protect ourselves by the simple precaution of reminding ourselves mechanically in every instance that *this* proposition, too, has its two distinct sides. Each impending contact with the public—no matter how small—should, as a matter of fixed routine, be broken down and tested sufficiently for its proposer to

1. discount his own side; weigh his personal prejudices for and against
2. discover its public side; how best to present it and how eagerly the public will accept that presentation.

Hotels find that the most insignificant surprise—a morning newspaper thrust under the door, or, more delicately, a flower on the breakfast tray—will be pleasantly remembered long after guests forget far

greater favors in the regular routine. Ralph Hitz found at the New Yorker Hotel, where every possible investment was made in elaborate service, the things most talked about were the little services that bear on the customer's personal habits. A phone call to the room, from the manager's office, asking if the guest has settled down comfortably, makes a grand impression on people. In Chicago, Manager Smith of the LaSalle sends a basket of fruit with his personal card.

These mild examples are here introduced not because they are so surprising, but because they are slightly contradictory. Showmanship is generally contradictory—so completely contradictory that one almost despairs of formulating any principles. That is because showmanship must always reverse itself to fit the occasion. For example:

Herschel V. Jones began building a reputation that made him a great newspaper proprietor by carefully borrowing $50 from a bank. He did not need $50, except to pay it back promptly for future credit. Charles Schwab, in startling contrast, tore up a contract for $1,000,000 a year salary. And received, in proper payment for its unexpired term, a quite unexpected gift of bonds.

When General Goethals took dictatorial charge of building the Panama Canal, he astonished everyone by quietly laying aside his army uniform. Contrast Major General Wood, as Governor General of Cuba, marching in full army uniform down the sun-

scorched streets of Santiago solemnly swinging a censer in a Catholic Saint's Day procession.

Rufus Choate once forced a witness who had unexpectedly given evidence clearly detrimental to Choate's side of the case to repeat his testimony slowly while Mr. Choate himself, pencil in hand, carefully wrote it out word for word. This bold move quickly extracted from the jury's mind the feeling of cherishing a damaging secret. A new sense of power, flattered into the jurors' minds, offset the harm. It is akin to the more modern selling psychology of R. C. Borden, who trains his salesmen never to avoid the customer's objections; but, on the contrary, to *re*state them, with the utmost care, in the customer's own words.

The Scope of Showmanship

To the master showman no idea is too large for handling—no detail too small. Showmanship has no starting or stopping. Wherever you find leaders dealing with humanity, there you will find showmanship, whether getting votes, getting money or just getting attention.

Processions are the earliest and, perhaps, still the most interesting examples of pure intuitive showmanship. Since the first victorious captain originated the "local-boy-makes-good" gag by marching home with his spoils, processions have been mankind's delight. Since the first chieftain was borne less successful, but no less successfully, in solemn pomp to his pyre. Conquering warriors under the glorious Roman

arches down to slim young Lindbergh grinding along on second-speed through a snowstorm of ticker tape and torn New York newspapers. All these were once "shows" in the truest sense. The triumphant victor, the shields of the enemy, the captives in chains—they were originally displays, spontaneous and natural. Whenever today the situation justifies, socially and emotionally, the parade is still symbolical and splendid in spirit. The False Armistice celebration, for example, and the homecoming of the A.E.F.

War is not what it used to be. Early literature had but two basic themes: love and war. Chivalry and romance, however, have undergone revolutions not merely in real life, but in stage and literature.

Where to Look for Showmanship

One might naturally assume that "shows" would be the first place as well as the last place to look for showmanship. Particularly since showmanship's basic elements—suspense, pathos, humor, cast, scenery, motion—remain unchanged despite more sophisticated modern expression. Showmanship is, of course, still found in politics, and in the pulpit. Rather more in the newspaper. Showmanship is not unusual in circus, stage and radio. But many "shows" have surprisingly little showmanship. Hardened by routine, "theater" tends rapidly to lose its original genius. In fact, the more continuously any art—whether burlesque, bullfighting or ballet—finds regular expression through an original dramatic routine, the more quickly is its showmanship likely to

cool off into an ash of formula with few flickers of its original fire. Showmanship, hashed and rewarmed, becomes hokum and buncombe, an antithesis of sentimental husks.

Nevertheless, it is to shows, sports, circuses and other forms of entertainment, as such, that the businessmen must still look for the showmanship formula. And from the routines of which we must try to reconstruct its basic principles. Because these entertainments were built professionally to survive—and still do survive—by attracting paying customers and pleasing them to at least lukewarm enthusiasm.

The Harry Reichenbach[2] school of showmanship, while tremendously effective as a series of sensational coups, has done much to throw showmanship into doubtful repute businesswise. To many businessmen the word "showmanship" still, unfortunately, suggests a nifty lad with a tilted derby and a black cigar, planting president's daughter in the arms of competitor's son, with only kleig lights and clicking cameras to screen the lovers from a cheering mob that overflows Times Square. Somewhere, of course, an "angle" calculated to sell more hardware. Or liver pills.

But this is not good showmanship. It's not even bad showmanship. For showmanship worthy of the name never defeats its own purpose. Circus tactics, blood-and-thunder press-agentry, while a notable

[2] Read *Phantom Fame*, the real life story of Harry Reichenbach, nimblest-witted of the theatrical press agents. A mad panorama of mummies in Times Square, Turkish virgins alternating in hotel rooms with live lions, etc.

example of the possibilities of the showmanship impulse, are only an extravagant expression of its minor strategy. Only because the professional "press agent" represents high-pressure promotion applied to the necessarily colorful show business itself have their stunts gained so great a reputation. A mere accident. The truth is that an analysis of its day-by-day show promotion would probably prove the amusement industry bulking a lower average quantity of *good* showmanship than a comparable selling effort made by a group, let us say, of refrigerator manufacturers. A recent survey estimating the advantages of selling entertainment showed that stores need ten times as much advertising as theaters to get one-half as many customers.

On behalf of department stores, however, Kenneth Collins says that he would not stage a personal appearance of Amos 'n' Andy unless he could directly tie it up with, say, a $1.65 "Fresh Air Taxi" in the toy department. He doubts the commercial value of *any* sort of entertainment not *directly* connected with the store's daily sale of goods. Macy's, Hearn's, Marshall Field's, Bloomingdale's, Saks', McCreery's, to be sure, have their parades, their theaters. Among them they entertain delightfully hundreds of thousands every year. But half a dozen small Belascos behind their counter may be using more real showmanship than exists in all these extrinsic "circuses" put together. In these more obvious performances there may be no genius to compare with the subtle but unconscious gesture of some eighteen-dollar a

week infants'-wear clerk who captures a customer by proudly placing an angora baby-hat on a piece of cellophane to create a sense of preciousness. Or, in some instances, tactfully setting the baby on the cellophane to create a sense of safety!

The libraries are full of splendid books giving *examples* of showmanship. This book hopes to go a step further than any of these. We hope herein to take showmanship apart; to see what makes it click. Most of all, though, we hope to expose its several simple elements so practically that the everyday businessman can utilize this great human force of showmanship as simply as he turns on his electricity.

Showmanship acts in an infinite number of ways. That we have seen. But, as we shall see, all these ways trailed back to their fundamentals may be reduced, mechanically and psychologically, to fifty-five common factors—surprisingly few and simple.

So don't let the glamour of showmanship dazzle your perception of the duller routine by which it is generally achieved. From Merlin to Houdini, magic has been hard work shrewdly dispensed. The regular routine of showmanship applies not alone to the detailed execution of your plan but goes back even to its earlier inspiration.

Take, for example, the opening of a new Shell Petroleum filling station in St. Louis. Seldom was a Hollywood première more colorful. Giant spotlights glared. Bands blared. Speeches flared. To service an old T-model Ford, clowns; executives in full evening dress volunteered service to visiting cars. Pretty girls

from the local Shell offices, dressed as chorus girls to entertain the crowds. More than two thousand cars were attracted for service in the first twenty-four hours. The whole city of St. Louis, more or less, was made new-station conscious. Yet there was no striking originality of idea or action. Not a thing that couldn't easily be devised by a painstaking checkup, *one by one*, of all the easily available resources, followed by a smart utilization of them all at the same time.

Or take the same thing on a larger scale: The Quaker Oats Company, in search of more sales, decided on straight showmanship. To put some new life into their promotion they hired Terry Turner, a noted exploiteer and formerly head man of the Loew's Theaters press staff. One of the first things Turner did was to arrange a tie-up with a Joe E. Brown talking picture production called *The Six-Day Bike Rider*. This by the simple expedient of offering motion picture theater operators all over America one thousand free *bicycles!* And $1,000 in additional cash prizes for the best hookup displays featuring the Joe E. Brown picture *and* Quaker Oats. In New York this resulted in a professional six-day bicycle rider *riding* a bicycle, of home-trainer type, in a show window in full view of Broadway crowds. So successful was this publicity that Mr. Turner arranged a similar tie-up with a Claudette Colbert picture. The same type of exploitation was, of course, adapted to the feminine "angle." Shortly thereafter Quaker Oats put out somewhat tamer publication

advertising built, nevertheless, around Clyde Beatty, the famed wild animal trainer. In a campaign full of circus atmosphere, boys were offered free books on showmanship subjects as *How to Start Your Own Circus, How to Teach Your Dog Tricks,* etc.

Still, no striking originality.

For all practical purposes, then, thoroughness in checking the more or less obvious possibilities of showmanship can take the place of a naturally agile imagination, just as surely as a certain number of hours' practice under some standard method will enable you to play the piano. Matthew Buser, head of the American International Corporation, used to say, "learn the principles of success from a successful man, exactly as you would study music under a master musician." That is the best way to learn showmanship. Any ordinary businessman can, whenever he pleases, achieve reasonable fame as a showman by selecting for his own purpose any one of a dozen ideas elicited by no magic more brilliant than a patient mechanical checkup of sources.

The *World Almanac,* for example. Its index is an excellent check list for tie-up ideas.

Or take *this* book. Scarcely an idea in this book that might not somehow be twisted about to apply profitably to your business, if you will take the trouble to dig down with us to the *principle* beneath the stunt. These principles, as we have already noticed, display themselves in an infinite number of fantastic ways. But since they are all intended to appeal to the same few fundamental human emo-

tions, these phenomena classify themselves more readily than one might expect.

But before examining a list of them, let's first consider what showmanship

1. won't do
2. will do

to which we now turn.

2

WHAT SHOWMANSHIP WILL DO—AND WON'T

First, showmanship will practically never add to a proposition. "No," said the famous Baron Rothschild to a friend who had asked his financial aid, "I won't put any money in your proposition. But I will walk with you arm-in-arm across the floor of the Exchange."

That was showmanship in its truest sense.

More importantly, it reveals a keen appreciation of showmanship principles. For showmanship generally, like Baron Rothschild, will display a proposition, but practically never add to it. The chief value of this small book, as we said a few sentences back, may be that its study of showmanship may enable an untrained man

1. to judge whether his proposition possesses intrinsically the elements of showmanship;
2. if so, to select these elements—rather than others—and feature them along lines of proven effectiveness;
3. if, on the other hand, he finds within his proposition no natural elements, promptly to

discard it in favor of something more promising. Never to try to *add* showmanship.

Showmanship, in real life, *does* only four practical things:

1. Attracts attention—*favorable* attention when rightly handled
2. Emphasizes
3. Emotionalizes
4. Creates action.

Let us look, in that order, at these four positive functions of showmanship. Take first the scandalous youth of one of America's great showmen. The elderly Mr. Ford, demurely collecting old windmills, would scarcely remember himself along with Winton and Barney Oldfield as a swashbuckling racing driver. Yet, amazing as it now seems, there were days when automobiles were still so infrequent as to need publicity. It was then needy young Ford kept his factory payroll going by a boldly conceived idea of breaking the world's speed record in his own new four-cylinder car. He did a mile in 39-1/5 seconds, on frozen Lake Sinclair, cutting seven seconds off the world's record. Thus, at one bold swoop, Ford became a famous automobile racer and, more important to him, moved a vital step nearer to becoming the world's most famous automobile manufacturer. For our purpose, let Mr. Ford's showmanship advertise only one important principle: getting attention is not enough—the attention must, of course, be *favorable.*

Thomas Edison, as an express messenger back in

Civil War days, printed a small newspaper in his baggage car. He bribed friendly telegraph operators to send ahead brief bulletins of the most spectacular news. As a result of this enterprising showmanship, Edison found a crowd of people at stations anxiously —and favorably—awaiting him in practically an ideal attitude of mind.

Some years ago Briant Sando, an advertising man, dropped a client's lawn mower out of an airplane from a height of some 2000 feet; picked up the mower and proceeded to cut the grass on the edge of the airport. Advertising was issued showing airport scenes alongside pictures of the Chrysler building, pointing out that the lawn mower had been dropped from a height greater than that of the tallest building in the world at that time. This backed up the slogan "It's Unbreakable."

United Drug stores get favorable attention from boys and girls, even for a health-food, traditionally distasteful as spinach, by holding before their admiring eyes a rubber horse and doll—and telling the young visitors that either may be theirs with mother's purchase of a pound can of Vita-ful, a chocolate-flavored food beverage.

An illustration of the difference between attention and "favorable" attention can be had by considering the manner in which two companies used a homely box of matches to help merchandise their products. The match companies sell billions of book matches annually to companies that want a spark of consumer attention. Not content to buy attention—two

companies bought "favorable" attention with two simple bits of showmanship. An oil company pointed out that the sharp abrasive on which you strike the match was made from the filings removed from overused motor oil. And Electrolux, to merchandise the "silent" refrigerator, gave salesmen packages of the new giant matches. The salesman lit the match before the prospect—and while it burned, he pointed out that Electrolux operated as silently as a match since its only moving part was a tiny flame.

It took advertisers a long time to learn that quality of attention is fully as important as quantity. More important, in fact. For many years, in almost every approach to the public, attention has been sought for its own sake, without too much question as to quality. More attention has been accepted unquestioningly as better than less. Yet discriminating practicing psychologists increasingly recognize that much "publicity" is not only not convertible into favorable action, but actually distracts from the concentration of favorable attention at some less spectacular point of profit. Everyone can realize that *unfavorable* attention may easily be worse than none. Less easy to classify is an unrelated attention—*an attention not DIRECTLY tied up with the SALE of the product.*

Moe Levy, during the World War, put in the window of his Newark store a chart of the European battlefield, and posted quick bulletins of current battle news. This inexpensive stunt pulled in the crowds. In this case, the attention was obviously undue. The

showmanship, for whatever it might be worth, was in diverting into the plate-glass windows of a clothing store a distant and distinctly extrinsic public interest. As another example, take a radio show where an enthusiastic announcer exuberantly praises, as he goes along, the program, the songs, the artists—how much favorable attention is left for the product?

Good showmanship, at any rate, must not only get attention, it must get favorable attention. Even that is only a start. Your good showman contrives with that attention to *emphasize* the particular feature he wishes to drive home. Goethals did more than doff his army uniform while building the Panama Canal. To emphasize his fairness and democratic accessibility to the lowest workman, he held informal outdoor "court" every Sunday morning in the Public Square. More dramatically, wounded General Sickles saved the day at the Battle of Gettysburg by using the same principle of simple visibility. He had himself carried up and down the lines on a stretcher while he smoked and made cheering remarks. This courageous, though not altogether original act, emphasized to the wavering Union army not only that their leader had not been killed, but that he was rather enjoying the battle.

The Chicago *Tribune* emphasized its age with particular dignity. At a Christmas greeting, it gave readers a special sixteen-page section of front-page reproductions of the Chicago *Tribune*, recording important events in national history from the year 1861 on down. Amos 'n' Andy, emphasizing the fact it is

the oldest script on the networks, celebrated the 2,133 episode with a special birthday broadcast. In celebration of its thirtieth anniversary, a drugstore in a small city awarded a free box of candy to every child bringing in a penny of 1908. That, of course, splendidly emphasized the year the store was established.

By advertising that the printed copy on the back of the label is clearly to be seen through the bottle full of liquid, Hoffman Beverage Company emphasized the clearness of their products. Nujol regularly prints an advertisement on the back of bottle labels to be read from the back of the bottle through an inch of crystal-clear oil. But, watch the same principle work backwards: a dealer in automobile lubricants had the oil drained from an old car driven far too long without a change. He had a druggist evaporate the dirty oil and return the residuum with a certified letter. This residue the dealer then put in his show window. Above the pan he hung a huge magnet. Hundreds of sharp, steel-scratching particles to damage car cylinders were thus made plainly visible. A short sign emphasized to motorists the fairly obvious lesson that their cylinders aren't benefited by infrequent changes of oil.

John Held Jr. illustrated a humorous booklet of colored drawings sketching entertainingly the varied facilities of a hotel. The booklet, called *Around the Clock at the Barbizon-Plaza,* emphasized the many activities with which a guest there could easily while away the day. Charles K. Everett, representative of

the Cotton Textile Institute, predicted a new method of using cotton would cause $1,000,000 a year to be spent on its use in building highways. The new product, manufactured from cotton, was laid in blanket form on a half mile of well-traveled Mississippi post road. This not only emphasized practicality, but advertised the product.

With considerably more finesse, the Loose-Wiles Biscuit Company, deciding that soup furnished an unsaturated market for its unsold saltines, set out at a salesmen's convention to create in the minds of its salesmen a highly synthetic natural affinity between Soup and Saltines. To do this they staged an ingenious series of pictures of *Food Sweethearts*: Peaches-and-Cream, Ham-and-Eggs, etc. These historic pairs were in turn attractively represented by real actors in appropriate costumes. As the climax, not unnaturally, came a can of soup. Naturally enough, *alone!* Her lines enforced the inescapable fact of her disquieting solitude. Soup awaited *her* sweetheart. After sufficient suspense, enter a Saltine. Soup-*and*-Saltines!

As we have just seen, showmanship, skillfully used, attracts favorable attention; and, more, emphasizes the particular point upon which this favorable attention should most naturally focus. For the effective operator even in coldly intellectual affairs, dramatically controlled emotion is the logical and necessary tool. To transform attention into action, we must first *emotionalize*. A good showman might, in fact, be defined as one who takes no chance with

mass intellect. He knows that people in commercially profitable numbers are moved not by argument, not by logic, not even by their own best interest. He knows a-motion follows e-motion. Merely to quote from Paul Yawitz—

"The town's best showman: the blind lad on 50th St. behind the Roxy who sings 'With My Eyes Wide Open' a dozen times a night"—

may be the best possible example of the emotional element in showmanship. In the slow days of 1932, a piano company published a large newspaper advertisement showing simply a striking picture of a multitude of "hands"—an actual photograph of skilled hands at their factory which they must keep busy making pianos. The appeal was splendidly successful. Everyone benefited by this touch of emotion. In Irving Cobb's book, *Judge Priest,* he tells how a clever lawyer got a verdict in favor of a Confederate soldier by arranging with a band to play "Dixie" outside the courtroom while the jury was coming to a verdict. On the other hand—you have in real life the spectacle of Sam Insull, charged with robbing widows, getting off scot free because of the failure of the prosecution to use anything more emotional than volumes of statistical evidence. One impoverished investor as evidence for the state would have affected that jury more than volumes of records. Five feet of flesh and blood could do far more for justice than fifty feet of ledgers.

Most important of all showmanship powers is its

ability to make people *act*. Good showmanship, as we have just noticed, contrives always to concentrate favorable attention—emotionally reinforced when necessary—and thus secures its end. That desired end is usually expressed in action.

Showmanship gets action, then, because it is a sharpening of the power of suggestion. It's suggestion with spikes on it. It's suggestion with a slug in its glove. Much of its success lies in its interesting presentation—which pierces inertia while less interesting presentations of the same ideas don't even get to first base.

E. H. Harriman is said to have ordered his board of directors to vote first and talk afterward. Mr. Harriman probably never gave these directions—certainly never gave those orders. But showmanship managed somehow to establish the principle for him and thus tactfully attained the same desirable end.

The epitome of showmanship directness in inducing action—regular mail-order selling—is found in church when the collection plate is passed. No vague suggestion of donation here. The action is urged directly. Plainly in the public eye. Then reinforced by personal example. Does your sales promotion so ask for business? Or does it merely suggest that a collection box may be found in the vestibule? If not so privileged as a church, perhaps, isn't your proposition at least as deserving as a night club? Then why not be as enterprising as the hat-check girl? First she puts the plate where you can't miss it. Then

she leaves always on it a coin large enough to remind you that here is big business.

From the small country store that moved slow molasses by giving negro customers coupons that meant donations to their little wooden church, to the great "sales" that in August move millions of dollars' worth of furs and furniture, there is no difference in underlying showmanship. Each "throws in" enough *additional* value, with reasons sufficiently picturesque and peculiar, to coax men and women to buy more or earlier than would be their normal, natural impulse. Nearly a billion dollars' worth of goods will be *given* away this year merely to move merchandise, first-rate, high-grade, well-advertised *wanted* merchandise, merchandise that by all rules of business would be expected to move itself. This amount—more than $500,000,000 at wholesale—is in *premiums* alone. Not price reductions. Not combination sales. But free gifts of additional articles often unrelated, but chosen largely for their chances to exhibit showmanship.

Finally, take two extremes in bill collecting, fantastically far apart: a small American tailor and the great Chinese New Year's festival. First the small tailor: he found that one of his customers regularly ignored his monthly bills so long as their amount was about what he expected to owe. Using clever strategy, the tailor sent this customer a special bill with a showmanship total twice what the man really owed. Response was immediate. The customer appeared protesting the "preposterous" overcharge of

$40.19. He refused to pay a penny more than the $20 he *knew* he owed. Except that it, too, withdraws emphasis from the mere matter of payment and seeks action upon an intelligently emotional basis, the Chinese method of "losing face" if all debts are not settled at New Year's bears, of course, no resemblance to this petty tailor's trick. Yet the doughty Captain Dollar once told the U. S. Chamber of Commerce, "In all these years dealing with the Chinese, involving many millions of dollars, we have never lost a single cent, never had one bad debt."

There's a certain pleasant relation between the gorgeous dragon celebrations with all their firecrackers, tom-toms and lettuce curleques and the wisdom of a nation with 4,600 new years civilizationally ripe enough to make the new year's celebration mark, businesswise as well, a clean-cut closing of the old year's books.

3

THE FIRST ELEMENTS OF SHOWMANSHIP

SHOWMANSHIP makes a show! Yes. But how to get it? Where to find it? Obviously, the best place to study is where we can find showmanship most successfully at work on the largest possible scale. One might, perhaps, well start with a publication whose weekly box-office regularly exceeds any other conceivable show. The *American Weekly* has more than 6,000,000 come-and-get-it circulation a week. To gain this overwhelming supremacy, the great Hearst weekly has, admittedly, the circulation advantages of a dozen big newspapers. Informed observers, however, will tell you that it works the other way—that it's the *American Weekly* that makes these newspapers big.

You will find few, on either hand, to quarrel with a statement that Mr. Hearst's comic section and Mr. Goddard's magazine section combine to form the greatest audience gatherer of any description ever invented. In one of the *American Weekly's* own advertisements of its lighter side, four reasons are stated for this popularity—four keys to people's interest:

1. Make them laugh
2. Make them cry
3. Thrill them
4. Talk of love.

Let's ask editor Merrill Goddard to elaborate a bit on the more serious side for the benefit of serious businessmen. Here are a few of his "Sixteen Elements of Human Interest":

LOVE—including Concern for Animals, Sentimentality, Sympathy, Pathos

HATE—including Revenge, Envy, Intolerance, Cruelties, Atrocities

FEAR—including Cowardice, Health Fads, Apprehension of Evil, Dependence

SCIENCE—Craving for Knowledge, Interest in Abnormalities, Prodigies

AMUSEMENT—Recreation, Inventiveness, Sports, Contests, Games, Festivities, Humor, Absurdities, Escape from Boredom, Thrills.

For forty years, Mr. William Randolph Hearst personally supervised every week the "funny" pages that finally brought as much circulation as was had by his nearest three or four more serious rivals combined. This may lend some force to the fairly rash statement on the first page of this small book that success in any business is mostly a matter of starting right. And getting righter. For "comic" strips are admittedly most effective of all circulation getters. And, in many respects, the most effective kind of advertising. Radio gives a close parallel of success

by which to check: The Goldbergs; Amos 'n' Andy; Myrt and Marge. It is the regular appearance of the same whimsical characters, generally repeating just about the same simple acts, often ridiculous acts, we learn to expect them to perform for our amusement. Yes, and even envy.

Once asked to tell a mail order convention in a single sentence the one most important thing in all selling, I (kmg) had to answer more forcefully than grammatically:

"Don't tell people how good you make your goods. Tell them how good your goods make them."

And there, perhaps, is the nubbin of business success. Make the *other* man—every other man—any other man—all the other men—feel BIGGER. They, in return, will build you bigger than you could ever build yourself.

The explanation is simple. Obvious. Above all things, your human being wishes to express himself. *Not* your way. *His* way! In millions of most surprising ways . . . funny, amazing, pathetic. Those of us who can't express ourselves directly, find an indirect way through somebody or something—a football clash or a Mickey Mouse; a Father Coughlin or a Frank Merriwell. Or a Lindbergh.[1] The person

[1] Before he had been ashore six days Colonel Lindbergh was the recipient of the longest and most imposing speech delivered by the President of the United States since his annual address to Congress, fifteen medals had been awarded him, the Freethinkers' Society of New York had protested against the benedictions at his welcome, and he had been given what the Hotel Commodore described as "the largest dinner ever tendered to an individual in modern history." Statistics for this dinner showed that it required 36,000 cups and plates, 12,000 pieces of cake,

who actually furnishes us these friends may grow or do as he desires. That is, comic strips don't need to be comic. On the contrary, their antics contain no wit. And little humor. Either wit or humor might defeat their purpose. The newspaper strips are what psychologists call an "escape." They furnish us fantastic friends, the *same* friends *every* Sunday, doing and saying the things we might conceivably like to do and say did we enjoy their exciting existence.

Few people dislike their kind. Many are acutely uncomfortable out of the flock. Most people like people. Few of us are as rich in friends as we would like to be. So we lead our vicarious lives. Nine-tenths, perhaps, of our pleasantest existences are lived in imagination. We live with our Mutt & Jeffs; with our *True Story* experiences; with our Alice

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300 pounds of butter, and 300 gallons of green turtle soup, to say nothing of 2,000 heads of lettuce.

Meantime, in these same six days, a song written by George M. Cohan entitled "When Lindy Comes Home" had been sung by the People's Chorus of New York, a tower thirteen hundred and twenty feet high had been proposed in Lindbergh's honor in Chicago, a baby elk in the Brooklyn Zoo had been named "Lindy Lou," eleven laundries had sought to incorporate at Albany under the firm name "Lindy," the Western Union Telegraph Company had solicited thousands of telegrams of congratulation—"Twenty sample Welcomes. Check the one you want to send and write your name"—a new dance, the "Lindbergh Hop," had been invented in Los Angeles, a gentleman named C. Goldsmith had broken into print by urging that in behalf of cleanliness for growing boys bathtubs be called "The Spirit of St. Louis," the Shriners had invited Lindbergh to fly over their convention at Atlantic City, the New York *Times* had published an editorial on his hair, the Pennsylvania Railroad had named a Pullman car for him, the International Brotherhood of Magicians had made him an honorary member, and in the annual terrapin derby at Ponca City, Oklahoma, seven entries had been christened "We."

(Commentary on the American predilection for escape through the lives of others by Charles Merz in his *Great American Band Wagon.*)

Adamses and our David Copperfields; our Shirley Temples and our All-American Boys; our Gracie Allens and our Fred Astaires. Even when no longer exposed to these spark plugs for our imagination, we live in our memory of them. The average person of today lives more lifetimes in one day than our ancestors ever dreamed in a four-score lifetime.

Escape! We want it. Escape! We get it.

How? In the papers—on the screen—as spectators of sports—on the radio—in the zoo—in books and magazines. And the very things that we find in that escape are the things that smart merchandisers use as the key to unlock our interest. Signposts of desires—"Open for Business"—on prospects' pocketbooks. Human beings don't change—Charlie McCarthy, Mickey Mouse, Tom Thumb are variations, not novelties.

Human beings don't change. That is, human beings in mass; and this book concerns itself simply with groups large enough to be commercially profitable. For several pages we have been dwelling on newspapers, and millions of people go out and buy them every week. That is because the Sunday newspaper buying is *typical* of all buying. Whether man-by-the-million is reading the *American Weekly* or listening to the radio; whether he is listening to the radio or going to the theater; whether he is going to the theater or buying goods—his motives are about the same. The things that attract man to a theater are the easiest and safest things to use to get him into a store. In other words, whatever will fill empty

seats at the Roxy will empty full shelves at the Emporium.

That is because all successful shows, as we have suggested, use the same basic human elements, which for all practical purposes are exactly the four just quoted:

1. Make them laugh
2. Make them cry
3. Thrill them
4. Talk of love—with words and music.

Following our hope to help every businessman to become his own showman, let us extend these four factors into a fairly inclusive list of the outstanding elements of showmanship found commonly in all forms of professional entertainment, whether on stage, in literature, radio, street parade.

These then, alphabetically, we offer, with no pretense either of completeness or of scientific definition, as showmanship's fundamental elements.

You won't find all of these twenty-odd elements in any show, or any of them in every show. Not more than a half dozen are dominantly important. For the next few pages, nevertheless, let's examine each in as few lines as possible.

Adequacy Plus

In red capitals, neat but thinnish, is painted "Help Keep Your City Clean," on the rear end of New York D.S. trucks. Excellent advice. Unfortunately, the small lettering is on a comparatively small *white*

panel. Ordinary use will soon render this "Keep Clean" admonition as distressingly soiled as it starts distressingly insignificant. Good showmanship sends in contrast a man to do a boy's job: a *big* man.

The New York Commissioner of Sanitation had a good idea. But it needed adequate expression. For practically no extra cost, compared with the importance of the job of selling an idea to 7,000,000 New York citizens, every truck could have had a striking big poster design of real merit showing, say, a street cleaner and a citizen in joint action. Stenciled in bright durable colors on the side of each truck, this easy bit of additional showmanship not only might —but certainly would—have made municipal history.

Any gesture of showmanship on the part of a city commissioner is, perhaps, more than we have a right to demand, anyway. On the other hand, what shall we say of our great showman friend, Major Bowes? On that same day, America's foremost Major was carrying on a bit of pale blue fence of his Capitol Theater a small white painted sign, even more insignificant than that on the truck, barely whispering "The World's Greatest Show Just Around the Corner on Broadway." Some enterprising outdoor painter should sell Major Bowes the showmanship-begins-at-home idea as enterprisingly as he took into radio the truth that showmanship-begins-with-the-audience.

Similarly highway police in Utah are equipped with motion-picture cameras to take pictures of any

person jeopardizing highway safety. Of the first 53 cases photographed, 48 pleaded guilty after looking at the film; 3 of the remaining 4 were convicted when the jury saw the movies.

A paper mill ran an advertisement in American Paper Merchant offering $1,000 for information leading to the hiring of a good sales executive.[2]

The New York World's Fair Preview was a model for adequacy in showmanship. No item was neglected. From debutante's ball to fireworks: window display contests to triumphal motorcade! Quite another sort of "adequacy" is invoked by Previews, Inc., which brings to any prospective buyer of a suburban house moving pictures of a large number of actual properties selected for his requirements.

Aptness

A feeling of easy *rightness*! Awkwardness has wasted many a good show. The cigarette store clerk places the gift matches on top the cigarettes, so the customer picks up both with one motion. A hat retailer sells more hats by presenting them to the customer crown side down. The customer then immediately puts it on his head—and so before looking at the hat, looks at himself.

Arrangement

"Arrangement," of course, means working out a definite pattern, or composition, for every public presentation from a show window to an after-dinner

[2] The cost of the ad *and* $1,000 could have been saved simply by asking Phil Howard, the publisher, to recommend a man.

speaker. Two short anecdotes on public speaking, in fact, may best introduce that element. A man coming into a public hall asked a man coming out:

"Is Mr. S. making a good speech?"

"Splendid," answered the other.

"What's it about?"

"I don't know. He didn't say."

The other, equally familiar, is the old darky preacher's description of how he managed to hold his congregation spellbound through his long sermons:

"First," he said, "I tell 'em what I'se gwine to tell 'em. Then I tell 'em what I'se tellin' 'em. And then I tell 'em what I done tole 'em."

The sure way to lose people in any operation is to fail to make clear the *pattern* of your proposition. Even when listening in self-interest to flattering talk, your human being gets restless until you make clear what it is all leading up *to*. On the other hand, the surest way to take a crowd with you, physically, mentally, or emotionally, is to mark out milestones, so to speak, and give them every now and then the pleasure of marking mutual progress. Speakers who wouldn't attempt to play golf or tennis without setting up scoring units will come out and look an audience in the face without giving it the slightest hint either of points to be scored or even of ultimate goal.

Conflict

People like action. Action in competition, whenever possible. Above all, people delight in *conflicting*

action. Because we all love contests or fights,[3] the sporting pages of a newspaper are closely read. Yet those pages rarely if ever describe a show, sport or speaker powerful enough to hold the attention of an audience in which even only two members start a rival conflict in a minor altercation of their own. In office, politics or in the street, the fighting man or dog gets far more attention, proportionately, than a three-alarm fire. Ely Culbertson, for one, capitalized this by adding to his subsphere of subconscious sex conflict, so subtle in his personal promotion, the atmosphere of the proverbial bridge-table argument or squabble.

George M. Cohan, while writing plays and running his own theater, used to hold the public eye

[3] Twenty-four special trains rolled into Chicago over the Pennsylvania Railway for the Tunney-Dempsey fight. Twenty thousand motor cars drove in from out of town. The New York Central's Twentieth Century Limited arrived in seven sections with seventy-seven Pullman cars. Twelve hundred reporters sat at the ringside. Two hundred and forty-five thousand miles of leased wire carried ringside news to twenty-five hundred papers. Tunney was brought into Chicago in an armoured car. Governor Len Small of Illinois achieved the honour of being permitted to climb through the ropes before the fight began but lost his introduction through an oversight. Two hundred millionaires sat in the first ten rows of the audience. And thirty-six hats, forty-nine pairs of binoculars, and two sets of false teeth were found by the cleaners on the morning after.

Meantime, for the benefit of those who could not get to Chicago and disagree as to what had happened in the seventh round, twenty-seven broadcasting stations were linked into another record-breaking hook-up. Forty million people are estimated by the managers of these stations to have heard the story of the fight. Prisoners in Sing Sing listened in by special permission of the Acting Warden. Five people dropped dead of heart failure at their radio sets during the seventh round, three more dropped dead while they were tuning in, one dropped dead in an argument after the bout was over, and another died of excitement half an hour later in his bed. In the words of the Associated Press, these are all official figures. (Charles Merz, *Great American Band Wagon.*)

by a series of fights. Whenever he could get an interview or even in a paid announcement, Cohan devoted much space to attacking unfriendly critics with the sole purpose of inducing them to denounce him at great length. He even put out a little newspaper of his own.

At a sales meeting, one salesmanager has actually broadcast to his audience of salesmen a round-by-round description of an imaginary boxing bout between a competing product and one of his own. A "Mistakes in Etiquette Contest" Gimbel's ran set a table in their window inviting the public to file the longest list of mistakes in its proper setting. 17,000 entries—gobs of publicity—an old man of 70 won the contest. Conversation buzzed from Germantown to Wilmington "Would Emily Post put a beer can on that table? Or wouldn't she?"[4]

Contrast

Crêpes Suzette is a Hollywood edition of a waffle. You have seen the chefs come in with the white hats, in front of your table at some swank restaurant and make Crêpes Suzette. You pay a dollar for it, too. It is drama and you are willing to pay for it. At Antoine's, the famous New Orleans restaurant, they make a sensation of the lighting of the Crêpes Suzette by turning out every light in the house for two seconds. This stunt stands out particularly because the restaurant otherwise is reserved and even colorless.

[4] How to Run a Prize Contest. By Zenn Kaufman. Harpers. $2.75.

James H. Blinn uses contrast. Like most letter writers, he knows that many discard a business letter without reading, principally because it looks precisely like any other letter. The Blinn Company has adopted the slogan, "Our Letters Are Re(a)d," and use a red letterhead as well as red typing of their letters. (The *important* words are emphasized in ordinary black!)

This sort of extreme is playing with fire.

We do not recommend, even remotely, the use of red typewritten letters! Nor anything that resembles the principle for general practice in any showmanship vehicle. But showmanship is strictly a pragmatic art and to the extent that anything *does* work, whatever works is good.

Curiosity

Percy Whiting, in selling an investment trust service, showed a prospect two lists of securities—each list worth the same $1,000 five years ago. The lists appear evenly balanced. He asks the prospect which list he would have bought. Turn the page! Current market figures reveal that one list (his, of course) appreciated. The bare statement of this fact, without the "Which is which?" introduction, couldn't possibly impress the prospect so definitely. Nor hold his attention. Besides being a Pandoric curiosity, this stunt has also a nice element of *conflict.*

Disarrangement

Statistics seldom come in any interesting form. That is why they *die* statistics. As news, statistics

live. In the hands of a keen reporter. Or a good advertising man. Or a good speaker. Each good speaker will practice in his own way the showmanship principles of *re*arrangement. Or, better perhaps, call it "revaluation." He will group—or regroup—all elements to make the greatest possible impression on the prospective customer. For example: some 50,000 Americans died in the World War. These deaths were at that time quite properly translated into a frenzy of patriotic sacrifice. Seventeen years later, the fact that there were *only* 50,000 killed in the A.E.F. is being used on a poster by the New York police to point out that city automobile traffic is more deadly than war. Here is showmanship effectively reversing identical figures.

Or leave war, for minor accidents nearer home. Frank Strouse, of the Pennsylvania Railroad, quoted to the New York Sales Executive Club the number of people injured in all sorts of accidents each year at 6,000,000. He said, "If the news were published that everyone in New York had been hurt in a single accident, the catastrophe would take the whole front page." Divided thus by time and space into small regular installments, every sort of continuing calamity goes unnoticed. Anyone dealing with habitual accidents, for example, must decide for his own purpose whether he can best dramatize to his advantage the 6,000,000 a year as one great instantaneous holocaust. Or dramatize them more effectively as a ceaseless procession: three injuries every second, day and night through to eternity.

A washing machine salesman makes his sales talk

to wives in the presence of their husbands. He mentions the efficiency of his machine, its time-saving; but he especially emphasizes the fact that it is a labor-saving device. He points out that an average working day consists of 8 hours and that the wife spends 240 hours a year—or 30 days—at backbreaking labor. The salesman has clinched many a sale by assuring a husband that he releases his wife from a 30-day sentence at hard labor for $79.50.

Look over every proposition you have to present and see if it, too, may not be advantageously rephrased in the buyer's terms rather than your own. Never assume, for example, that the obvious unit of *sale* is the obvious—or even the proper—unit of *buying*. Never assume that the proper price for selling is necessarily the proper price—or even a good price—for buying.

I (zk) was in Harrisburg one day to give a convention talk on sales contests. In the afternoon I had nothing to do, walked into a life insurance man's office, and offered to sell him, for $10, a one-hour conference on his sales contest problems. He turned me down flat. Then I gave him one idea. I asked him if he liked it. He said, "Yes." I asked, "Is it worth a dollar?" "Yes," he answered. "O.K. . . . sit still for an hour; I'll give you nine more and we'll have a deal." He did. The ten dollars for an hour's worth of ideas was too much in one piece for this man to see. One idea for one dollar wasn't. By presenting my story in units acceptable to him, I made a sale. There is the simplest possible lesson in revaluating.

Selling units are frequently influenced arbitrarily by standard coins, weights, sizes. But the buying unit is far more likely to be considered or debated in terms of the circumstances surrounding the use of the product.

Even in advertising this revaluation is vital. For a perfect example, take Chrysler's great advertisement:

> $70,000 for Seventy Pieces of Wood
> —because of the UNSEEN VALUE
> they possessed
>
> It was only the other day that newspapers carried the story of an old street musician who fiddled on a busy corner in a great city.
>
> As they dropped small coins into his battered hat, few gave him more than a passing look. Until a great musician came along . . . heard in the uncertain fiddling something that stopped him in his tracks. The musician stepped closer, looked sharply at the violin, spoke excitedly and bundled the old fiddler into a taxi . . . made him rich beyond his wildest dreams.
>
> For the violin was a Stradivarius. Worth $70,000.

Emotion

All of us take great pride in our ability to think things out. But it takes the heart to think things *in*! Motion, practically speaking, in any commercial quantities worth considering, comes *only* from emotion. Action and reaction are said to be always equal. The reverse is equally true. Action will result from reaction. The sharper the emotional reaction, the

more certain the buying action. A washing machine salesman grasps the 'phone and asks the husband "Suppose I told you the Chief of Police was on the wire and your wife had just been locked up and was about to be sentenced to 30 days at hard labor; would you give $50 to get her out of jail?" The prospect (quite helpless with his wife standing beside him) naturally answers "Yes" after which the salesman explains that his cleaner will save more than 30 days of hard labor—will save a day a week for years and years! The salesman who pictured to the young husband his wife in jail for 30 days of hard labor used an emotional appeal. He sharply reinforced it when he reached for the 'phone to call the chief of police. The emotional *reaction* practically guarantees a sale.

Saving has always been difficult for many because there is no definite emotion to crystallize the saving desire. A girl we know stopped an annuity simply because payments became too dull and impersonal a transaction. "Do you know all I get each month for my $44?" she said. "No," we replied, "what?" "A blotter!"

Even a picture of the home of the future, collie dog and all, falls short of putting the act of saving on a keenly self-satisfying basis. The Future, at best, makes too dim a picture! East River Savings Bank meets this situation by shifting the attack to the present. Provides the *"I. O. Me Reminder,"* a definite do-it-now savings plan. Safe in the knowledge that the average man pays 90 per cent of his

debts, East River puts a man in debt to himself. Boldly bills him once a month for the amount he declares he will save. This gives the future a fighting chance against the milkman, the landlord and long lists of other avenues of spending.

Investment companies, while on the right track, have a long way to go before they catch up with Fuller Brush or Ford. Do you realize there hasn't been a major improvement in the form of insurance policies in decades? When will somebody introduce a policy that the average citizen can read or understand?

Extremes

Dr. F. W. Gunsaulus, back in 1892, took an example of extreme largeness, "What I Would Do If I had $1,000,000." Armour, hearing the sermon, was so impressed that he proceeded to spend *several* millions and made Dr. Gunsaulus president of a new Armour Institute of Technology. The flea circus is, perhaps, the most obvious example of interest entirely through extreme smallness.

Fashion

Someone has said that fashion is sex with its clothes on. Fashion "shows" are so familiar that any comment is wasted. Beginning with 1937, some real fashion showman began to stage a show with a sort of playlet, sketchy scenery and a prop or two, letting characters thus established as *real* people show the clothes in a smart natural setting.

"Firsts"

Few people remember the fight to be New York's tallest building that resulted in the flashy needle point that suddenly topped the Chrysler Tower. People like firsts. There's no news in seconds—even when better than most firsts. On the other hand, clever enough handling, or sometimes mere size, can make firsts out of whole groups. Every year the mere list of "100 Biggest Banks" gets innumerable newspaper columns.

Friendliness

Many a public man owes his career to a fortunate ability to remember names. Leonard Ormerod tells how he once traveled on a stumping campaign with Senator So-and-so who had the world's worst memory for names. They worked out a perfect system, however. When somebody started for the Senator and the Senator didn't know his name, the Senator would say, "Quick, Leonard, get that guy." Leonard would then throw himself in the way of the oncoming unknown and say, "Hello, there. I'm Senator So-and-so's manager, Leonard Ormerod." To which the visitor would naturally reply, "My name is Johnson." That would be an immediate cue for the attentive Senator to turn quickly toward the pair and say, "Well, well, well, if it isn't my old pal, Mr. Johnson."

If a salesman can find any outside subject of common interest to converse on with his prospect, his

job is that much easier. One salesman, shortly after the Dayton flood, found buyers interested in the word, "Dayton" on his introductory card. A preliminary description of the recent flood made it far easier to sell his goods. Even the local postmark on a sales letter has been found to increase response as a gesture of friendliness.

Humor

You can't laugh people into buying your goods—that's been said often enough. True, you can't laugh them into wanting your merchandise, but you can laugh them into wanting you, which is a long step toward a sale. Or what you really do is laugh them into liking *themselves*—which is even better. Humor and "in good humor" are twin cousins. The sole function of the funny is to put people in a good humor, i.e., pleased with themselves. That, too, is the showman's aim.[5]

Have you ever studied laughter? Ludovici, in his book *Secret of Laughter*, searches a common denominator for all the reasons for laughter and finds it is a basis of a feeling of *superior adaptation.* Humor is the very aim of all showmanship: to put the onlooking prospect in a good humor is to prepare him for your sales story. To focus that same feeling on your product—simultaneously or instantly afterward—does the business. Even the logical, or

[5] Every office needs at least one man, who, though a competent workman, understands that existence is primarily a droll affair, with the horse laugh predominant not only to the grave but after the will is read. (Stanley Walker in *Night Club Era.*)

"reason why," approach helps put the prospect vicariously in a better humor if he uses your product.

Every form of laughter puts you in a superior position—pleased with yourself. Be content with a smile. Hand the other man his laughs. It's a very desirable condition of mind for the prospect—from your point of view.

Liveliness

People want life. Not only for its authenticity. But for its interesting qualities—change, color, motion. The human eye is adjusted for moving objects. The nearest substitute for real life always, of course, is "liveliness," whatever form most nearly approaches the peculiar outstanding qualities that best characterize that particular form of life. For example, a brilliantly colored painting of the vivid yellow greens and incredible blues of the West Indian waters is far better than motion. On the other hand, a very tiny white pennant actually fluttering in the wind atop a painting of the Hotel New Yorker lifts its billboard completely out of the class of the other painted outdoor advertising.

Mystery

One fine day, prominent people throughout Kansas City (Kan.) began to receive birthday cakes with eight lighted candles. The cakes were received by the president of the Rotary Club, the Lions Club, the Chief of Police, the secretary of the Women's Chamber of Commerce and other prominent people.

Each person was selected because of his or her key value with respect to large groups of people. News stories began to appear in the Kansas City *Kansan*, also strange advertisements.

No explanation of the mystery was made until the cake was delivered to the Chief of Police's office and the acting chief, by prearrangement, had two detectives follow the young lady who delivered the cake. She was discovered to be a messenger for the Kansas Service Grocers. A picture was made of the acting chief and two detectives and the president and secretary of the grocery organization—and the mystery was solved. By that time, almost everybody in Kansas City knew about the cake and was speculating about its meaning. The cakes had been delivered at the regular luncheons of the Kiwanis, Lions, Rotary Clubs, etc., and thousands of pictures of these cakes had been taken and mailed out to housewives. This direct mail promotion in coordination with the publicity stories and paid newspaper advertising built Kansas City up to a perfect peak of interest in the "pay-off." The final publicity story and a final explanatory advertisement told the public that the unsigned messages and birthday cakes were sent to hail the opening of the eighth anniversary sale of the Kansas City Grocers.

Mystery books sell big. Any witch's tale will always pull radio audiences. Mystery pictures pack movie houses. Your public loves mystery. Object lesson—give it to them in your sales promotion. Smart merchandisers do.

Mystery is one of the several elements of showmanship with enough inherent interest to be used either as a showmanship objective in itself or as a technique in increasing interest through use of other elements.

An example of pure mystery: Pure mystery is exemplified by a stunt used by the Automatic Washer Machine Company of Iowa in connection with a teaser approach to a drive for new dealers. The company was about to launch a campaign among its distributors and salesmen to get new dealers and the campaign was dramatized as "Kidnapping Campaign." The drive first reached the salesmen in the form of an unidentified strip of paper, on which was scrawled "The mob has picked you to do the job. Don't squeal or you will be croaked." These unexplainable missives caused considerable speculation on the part of their recipients, in some cases leading the men to go to the local police stations to find out what the mystery was all about. There were two follow-ups, both in the same style as the first mailing, and then several weeks later the explanation arrived in the form of the announcement of the contest.

Objective mystery: A series of advertisements of the Telephone Company used *applied* mystery, or *objective* mystery. The ads show famous characters trying to guess the cost of long distance calls. These ads directly focus the mind of the reader on the low cost of long-distance calls and toll service, using the mystery approach to the point that the ads establish.

Mystery excursions are another expression of the public's craving for the unknown. The *New Yorker* tells about a man who lived 140 miles from Washington, drove in one morning to take a mystery excursion. Train went back to his home town. He was disgusted—naturally—didn't want to return to Washington but had to get his car. This rather nicely illustrates a warning about mystery in general: don't go too far in teasing your public. Just as the importance of any design must, architecturally, justify its base, so a delayed denouement must be important enough dramatically to compensate for the suspense. If your public feels cheated, you are worse off than before you started. Therefore be sure that the net total of real human interest in the revelation is adequate reward for the extraneous interest claimed by its unusual presentation.

In the case of the Kansas City birthday cakes, as in a great many of the best-conducted "mystery" stunts, there was probably very little keen curiosity as to who might be sending the birthday cakes. The interest lay rather in the skillful development of a *game* in which well-known personalities successively played a part. The day-to-day interest was perhaps more in where the cakes would next break in the news. The form of mystery development, properly handled, is often of better effect, and always safer, than a serious attempt to create and sustain acute wonder in the public mind. Much as polite children play at Santa Claus and the stork tradition with

their grownups, so will the childlike public play along with any pretense that is interestingly enough presented at frequent enough intervals.[6]

Personal Note

The highest direct-mail response ever recorded—90 per cent—came when the first snapshooters took your picture coming down the street and handed you a quarter coupon to return. Nothing is so interesting to anybody as his own name. *Except* his own picture! Five hundred women college students were given a pen and asked to write: 460 of them—more than nine out of ten—wrote first their own names. Shown a map of the United States, 447 men in 500 looked first for the location of their own home town. Insurance companies used to get leads to expensive life insurance policies by printing a prospect's name in gold on a 30-cent leather diary.

More and more out-of-town customers of a firm failed to drop in when in New York. Subsequently, a young Westerner made president of the company, included a paragraph in all letters to these out-of-towners giving specific directions how to get to his office. The number of out-of-town customers who

[6] Employees are only human. You can easily step up your store training results by putting a touch of suspense into your technique. Professor Quiz would go over just as well in a sales meeting as he does on the air. J. R. Ozanne, the sales training expert and business trouble shooter, has been very successful with quiz methods. Typical questions:

Questionnaire for salespeople in a department store: a. Describe the articles in two of our windows this morning. b. What brand of hosiery are we famous for? c. Where did you buy your shoes? d. What is rayon made of? e. What is the population of our city? f. What did we advertise last evening?

came to the New York store was doubled by the end of the year.

Finkenberg's, a furniture store, sends you, a customer, a batch of discount tickets for you and your friends. The ones for friends are 5 per cent coupons —the one for you is a 10 per cent coupon. Don't you feel good! Statler did about the same when he directed floor clerks to call customers by their actual names. When you get off the elevator of a Statler hotel, the boy marches up to the floor clerk and says, "May I have Mr. Kaufman's key?" I am bound to feel a bit pleased with Kaufman.

Plausibility

Here is a true story for copy writers. A girl, out of work, mother to support, ran an orthodox advertisement stating she was an excellent stenographer. No replies. So she wrote this. It appeared in the newspaper:

> YOUNG LADY. UNRELIABLE. Dishonest when she thinks she can get away with it, lazy, desires position as stenographer, cook's helper, waitress, soda fountain jerker, wants short hours, big pay, has poor references. I really don't want to work but have a mother to support and prefer to be decent. Please telephone So-and-so.

She got 109 replies and picked her own job within twenty-four hours.

Along slightly the same line of attack, the Grand Valley Brewery Company ran a testimonial contest in reverse. Instead of asking for letters of praise, they solicited criticism. A prize of $100 encouraged

prospective winners to say freely why they did not like Friar's Ale. Sales jumped 30 per cent.

Realism

R.K.O., under the guidance of Leon Bamberger, uses realism with a vengeance. Even *Variety,* with the accumulated cynicism of 33 years in the show business, has at times commented on some of "Bam's" direct mail stunts. For *Hawaii Calls,* an actual pineapple. For *Victoria, the Great,* a framed and glazed medallion of Ann Neagle. For *Shell Game,* a message rolled in a blank cartridge.

When Harry Singer put on a series of luncheon meetings to sell advertising space in *Simplicity Magazine,* his big selling point was a saving of $17,000. He dramatized his "money angle" with huge bags of money. Before starting, he proceeded to open several of the bags and let the tinkle of falling silver dollars give added interest to his presentation.

Our good friend Milton Weill of the Arrow Mfg. Co. who manufactures boxes for jewelry manufacturers, developed a graduation package that looked like a regulation cap from a cap and gown outfit. In another case a package represented a rolled-up diploma. Weill's card, by the way, is a facsimile jewelry box.

To promote the idea that business was "booming" Clark Smitheman of Camden Fire Insurance Co. sent out a campaign announcement in a giant firecracker.

Innis Brown, publisher of The Gasoline Retailer, used a huge bean bag to dramatize his circulation of 77,000. He sent a bean bag to the advertisers with

a letter saying there were 77,000 beans in the bag and not one of them had even a rough idea of what the quantity really meant.

Frank Sutch, handling the promotion of the Madison and Jefferson Hotels in Atlantic City, put everything but actual bunnies into a mail piece designed to stir up Easter business. At slight cost he decorated each letter with a die-cut bunny-label such as Dennison sells in the novelty stores.

Years ago John Livingston who sells the advertising space in the Fifth Avenue busses, took an actual bus over to Philadelphia to an Advertising Federation of American Convention.[7]

Kolynos advertises "Teeth Like Pearls." Then puts an actual string of pearls in the hands of the cardboard lady in the show window. Jack Walker, who sends us this example, says, "If that isn't showmanship, I'll eat the pearls!" Listerine fills a realistic toy truck with actual cartoons, labels it, "We sell loads of Listerine." But they don't lose themselves too far in the spirit of youthful playfulness to neglect to add another sign explaining "World's most popular antiseptic, 41¢." A crowning touch of realism was given to a U. S. Lines store front when the door of the showroom was converted into a gangplank, railings and all. Fifty-seven thousand people visited this New York exhibit in five months. How many travel showrooms can claim one-tenth or one-twentieth of that crowd? Realism and atmosphere that was used

[7] They had to visit 22 garages before they found one with a front door clearance to permit them to park the bus off the streets.

in converting an empty store into a real ship were the sole reason for the difference.

Restraint

In a larger way, Philip Morris utilized this principle of restraint for one of the most sensational selling successes in many years. Aroused real excitement among the world's most blasé class of shopkeepers—cigar chain-store men—right at the start, by having Johnnie in person deliver Tiffany engraved invitation to listen to his opening radio program. Johnnie's fifty inches brought the top of his pillbox cap just above the level of each cigar counter. His bright scarlet jacket attracted attention outside each store as well as inside. Notice, however, the impeccable good taste and well-bred handling that gave this little visit its utmost value. Johnnie rode in a Rolls-Royce car equal to the best New York ever saw. A smart chauffeur in livery drove. But shrewd judgment, as well as good taste, stopped short of a liveried footman. Instead, a very tall secretary-companion in afternoon clothes, spats and silk hat, kept quietly in the background. Every move of the trio and its imposing car was made with the casual inconspicuousness of a spontaneous stop at a convenient cigar store. And so by its very modesty the act gained not only attention, but, in surprising degree, affection.

Simplicity

Mr. Woolworth, asked why he had built the (at that time) highest building in the world, offered

proof of his wisdom by pointing out that even the children's schoolbooks mentioned "Woolworth Building—the highest building in the world." Moreover, a European trade paper had, without even mentioning its name, typified the entire American nation by a picture of Woolworth's structure. This is the push-button era. Make the idea behind your product as simple as Mr. Woolworth's. Even more, its use.

The great emotional appeals of history have all been simple. The reason is plain. Showmanship is a purely emotional approach. Few people can feel more than one emotion at a time. The comparatively few who can reason can, perhaps, juggle several ideas into a logical action. But the mass to whom you appeal emotionally experiences only one impulse at a time. When Lawrence shouted, "Don't give up the ship," he didn't add any ands, ifs or buts. Consciously or otherwise, he knew better than to divert interest from his point. Similarly, with "Remember the Alamo," "Carthage must be destroyed," "They shall not pass," "Out of the trenches by Christmas," "A chicken in every dinner pail," and a score of other commands that have stirred the millions. Richard Borden, whose teaching of sales tactics has been marvelously successful, rates this intense concentration on one simple appeal as a fundamental feature in all showmanship and, indeed, in all effective selling.

Without rigid simplicity of appeal, it's suicide for a promoter of any sort to attempt to interest people in lots of 100,000 or more. Even boxing, for example.

As a fine old science and art, boxing has practically disappeared. People won't pay to see a boxer. Or, putting it another way, modern mass production of crudely uneducated audiences seeking the simplest passive sensation has forced ring promoters to offer not smart fighters, but heavy-fisted, thick-skinned smashers, who, in the parlance of the ringside, can "dish it out and take it." Such an audience actually resents skill in avoiding unnecessary punishment.

The famous Dempsey-Carpentier match in Jersey City was an excellent example of the force of simple, elementary appeal. Carpentier was a war veteran, while Dempsey had drawn high pay in the shipyards. It wasn't Carpentier, though, that attracted the Carpentier-Dempsey fight crowd. Carpentier, neither before this fight nor after, ever appeared in any other $1,000,000 bout. It was Jack Dempsey. And his punch. Carpentier was dashing, handsome and had a touch of romance clinging to him. But Dempsey was a fighter. A knocker-outer. It didn't matter much whether or not people liked Dempsey; they did like seeing him in simple forceful action trying to batter his opponent into unconsciousness.

Babe Ruth, in much the same manner, revolutionized the entire game of baseball. Brought it down to the mental level of the fans who can't enjoy the finer points. Baseball in McGraw's time used to have a certain intellectual pleasure along with its smarter physical feats. Strategy and finesse, bunts, stolen

bases, squeeze plays, hitting-behind-the-runner made a real game out of getting the runs in.

But at the audience expansion era, along came Ruth. When Mr. Ruth departed from the famous hitters of the past by taking a golfer's grip on the extreme end of his bat and thereby started his own highly specialized, but utterly simplified art of batting the ball over a short right-field fence, he quite unintentionally lifted most of the intelligence out of the game of baseball. The science of baseball began to wane. Other players imitated. Now huge crowds, completely uninformed about the "inside" game of baseball, can enjoy the magnificently simple thrill of watching to see—listening to hear—or even reading to ascertain—how successful is any given pitcher in preventing one or more famous opposing batters from hitting the ball obliquely into the right- or left-field stands so skillfully as to turn into a synthetic home run a normal center-field out. Better say, perhaps, Mr. Ruth eliminated practically all need of intelligence to enjoy a game of baseball. And thereby brought the game within the enjoyment of an additional two million fans. *Liberty* devotes a good part of a recent article on baseball to a description of how the Chicago White Sox tore down the right-field wall of Comiskey Field and rebuilt it nearer the home plate so that Al Simmons could hit balls over it. We are told, believe it or not, that the magnificent Cleveland lakeside stadium was abandoned largely because its vast symmetry al-

lowed the outfielder to back away far enough to prevent synthetic home runs.

Timeliness

The Josephson Store in Moline (Ill.) asked each girl in a high school graduating class to select her favorite silverware pattern. A page showing photos of all the girls was torn from the school yearbook and placed in the window with ribbons running from each photo to the girl's favorite silverware pattern.

Irwin M. Press, gentleman's tailor in New York, sends out this postal card invitation:

> Saturday afternoons radio will be welcome to you, to hear football games. Suits not sold during game time, but perhaps between halves if you insist.

At World Series time every fall, a certain baker draws roughly a baseball diamond on the floor of his show window. He puts a striking-looking cake at home plate. His sign reads, "*We* score at the Home Plate." Another sign says, "Make a home run with some of our specials." Cartoons of ball players and an outfield fence of cardboard give further atmosphere.

When the Federal Housing Corporation was making its effective drive to interest people in rebuilding their homes, the First National Bank of Seattle tied in effectively by transplanting an old shack into Seattle's Public Square. Local contractors and builders were invited to cooperate in renovating. The public was given a case picture of "face lifting" for

a tumbledown residence. Day by day and step by step, the modernization was accomplished under their very eyes. This, of course, would have been a good promotion at any time. It was, however, particularly smart at the time of the great current interest. Public interest in the Federal Housing Corporation approved this flagrant though temporary usurping of public property.

As to *un*timeliness, a radio announcer, around the first of June, somewhat inaptly announced a number thus:

"Victor Herbert has written so many melodies we can always get an inspiration. For this June morning, we have selected 'A Kiss in the Dark!'"

Vanity

In Cincinnati, mind you, 4,000 men went to a hat shop for measurement to ascertain which had a head most like that of Apollo Belvedere!

4

—AND 22 OTHER ELEMENTS

So much for the psychological elements. Now for the basic physical foundations. Roughly speaking, the eye is said to record 87 per cent of all impressions we receive; the ear, even with radio, 7 per cent; smell, 3½ per cent; touch 1½ per cent; taste 1 per cent. In all lines of business activity—as in personal and pleasure—these five senses perform with approximately the same relative importance.

Actuality

Life and death are admittedly matters of great consequence. Particularly life. Use it in your show. Few shows succeed without it. Life—that is, the mere fact of being actually alive and not either dead or artificial—is tremendously popular. Not only intrinsically is life desirable, but as a prime factor in actuality. More or less frightened in an unnecessarily complicated world, man fights to lay hold of the real. There's little or no ethics involved: man in the mass fears sham and trusts the actual: distrusts hypocrisy and seeks truth; but he does this, unfor-

tunately, less from high ideals than from ordinary common sense. So he distrusts the new—and clings to the old.

One of the most expensive errors in business—and one of the commonest—is the assumption that people generally are seeking something "new." Quite the contrary. Demand for novelty, *as such,* is dangerously overestimated as a commercial factor. There are, of course, a few adventurous souls always cruising about for the new. Since the new is news, naturally they are conspicuous. Numerically they are negligible. Some 70 per cent of fashion predictions fail, we are told, precisely for that reason. You may take it as a rule that the more spectacular any fashion is in deviating from the ordinary, the less important it is commercially. After a particularly extensive and effective advertising campaign for fancy lizard and snakeskin shoes which filled every New York window display for months, a count of 100 well-dressed women in Schrafft's showed that for every 12 women who wore them, 40 stuck to kid leathers and 25 wore plain patent leather pumps.

Most great businesses and all great advertisers have, therefore, become great mostly by resisting the temptation to try something new, for the sake of newness. Change? Oh, yes. That's different. The restless impulse towards a *change* is quite another matter. That is as natural as shifting in your seat in the last act of any thoroughly enjoyable play. As Frank R. Kent writes in the *Wall Street Journal,* "Elections are won by tides." Even this human im-

pulse towards change, however, is rather more a general revulsion from the overfamiliar than a yearning for anything new in particular. Mostly a matter of nerves. Not desires. Newness, of itself, attracts little attention. What attention newness—as such—does attract is *instinctively unfavorable.*

In these conflicting circumstances, naturally, the strongest of all human appeals is a new treatment of the old. The familiar object in an unfamiliar position always grips our attention, arouses our lively curiosity. Ralph Hitz of the New Yorker has an admirable grasp of this psychology. Every 30 days he changes the form of the menus of his five restaurants. People return to a restaurant from habit—still a lot of them will tire of it for the same reason if nothing ever changes. Just enough change to satisfy the restless feeling without fear of giving up the familiar friend. A golf school, for example, cleverly places its name on the sidewalk before its school on a tin flag similar to those used to mark off the greens on a golf course.

Animals

Most women like pets. A certain hardware dealer found that he could build up quite a trade for bird cages. Thence, 'twas an easy step to selling canaries at cost to attract women customers into the store. Most hardware stores would benefit by some smart light touch.

One of our friends who has a knack for getting

lots of free publicity attributes a great part of his success to his regular use of animals in his story. Within one year he used fish, eels, squirrels, pigs, dogs, cats—this whole menagerie appearing separately. Have you any idea how many people visit zoos? In those cities where there are zoos they draw millions. In the average city—the attending audience averages a visit every four months for every person in the city. And most of the visitors are *adults* with no children. Speaking of children and zoos, and reverting for the moment to "newness," one notes with interest that just as most of the mail-order fish are sold on the Atlantic seaboard, so books showing pictures of *animals* can be sold best in the cities that have zoos! In other words, even children don't buy the unfamiliar.

In advertising, too, people like pets. Silly, but true, *human* interest can be put into a picture by showing therein a cute dog or cat. There are, in New York, professional cat models that make a handsome living posing for advertisements. Never show a scene without some suggestion of life. Centuries ago the smarter old masters learned to put a melancholy bird or a slinking fox into their loneliest landscapes.

Statistically, the Chesapeake & Ohio Railroad found that its traffic came from 48 states. From a point of common characteristic, the company decided to call them all from Missouri. Instead of saying a customer could sleep like a kitten on this relatively unadvertised railroad, the customers might

prefer to be shown just how such a kitten might sleep. Therefore the company introduced pictorially the famous sleeping cat and kittens that by now have become a nationally advertised trio.

Authenticity (*Authority*)

Personality has even caught up with the Sears Roebuck catalogue. Two-dollar hats are now signed by Ann Sothern and other movie stars. Why? For authority. Authority is a by-product of personality. Some people you invite to your parties because they are lots of fun. Others you invite for effect only. Some personalities are used commercially just for their attention and interest value. But others offer the by-product of authority. Ann Sothern gives it to hats, Tilden gave it to tennis rackets, Bobby Jones to golf clubs. Many manufacturers wanted Lindbergh to give it to their product but he was too smart—even for cash.

Now, here's an example of the use of authority through mere use of atmosphere, without a definitely named personality. Sears shows men's shoes against a background of college football stadia. This in the mind of the rural reader implies the endorsement of the football player and the college boy. Inference creates almost as much effect as if Red Grange had signed the shoes himself.

Beauty

The manager of a popular restaurant once said to Mr. Abbott Kimball:

"Well, do you see that grapefruit over there with the red cherry in it? I get five cents more by just dropping the little cherry in the center!"

An attractive jacket, booksellers tell us, will often sell a book for six or eight weeks before people know enough about it to want to buy its contents. One of the best sellers among Macy's chinaware is said to be a plate bearing a wheat motif reduced to fit the china from a French mural design. Curtains in the several windows of each of his vacant houses has been found a good sales help by a speculative builder.

Color

Color association is a tremendous force in business. The public recognizes filling stations, candies, soaps, trademarks by their standardized coloring. But the association must be checked carefully back to the goods themselves. A candy manufacturer readily sold his merchandise when he wrapped it in red paper. His sales had been few when it was boxed in a blue package. One color expert found that certain colors that increased sales in a low-priced field decreased sales in high-priced fields. For example, a red-handled toothbrush sold well. But how few except the fire chief buy a really red automobile!

Not far from Salt Lake City is an ordinary lumberyard. The owner of that lumberyard had an idea. His name is Green: he painted the fence green, wore green socks, green suit, green tie, green hat, got the telephone company to break one of their rules and put a "Green" prefix to the number, used green ink,

and then advertised himself, "Green for lumber—when you think of lumber, think of Green's; when you think of Green's, think of lumber." His retail lumberyard did a great business. Then there's a printer in Salt Lake City doing things no other printer has ever done: In his print shop the girls wear smocks; they change the color every week. Every desk is painted a different color—pink, blue, purple, green, yellow. You may go away fearing you are goofy but you never forget the plant! Incidentally his immaculately clean shop has a sign, "$5.00 for any piece of paper you can find on the floor," and he will pay you if you find it. The presses are painted different colors, they have a nice Thirty-four paper cutter painted a beautiful baby blue. A nice Chandler & Price automatic press, on the other hand, is painted a beautiful violet. Now, why? It attracts attention; people come there, they remember that printing plant; it does a good business.

Certain combinations of color in stationery and enclosures in direct-mail selling are found to sell better than others. Here, for a single example, is the experience of Caslon Bond.

Percentage of List Responding	*Color of Letter Paper*	*Illustrated*	*Color of Envelope*
48	Pink	Yes	Blue
34	Canary	Yes	Blue
28	Green	Yes	Blue
26	Pink	No	White
26	Corn	Yes	Blue
21	Canary	No	White
18	White	Yes	White
16	Green	No	White
14	Corn	No	White
12	White	No	Blue
9	White	No	White

Great magazines, whose lavish use of color editorially is essential to their circulation and who sell color pages by the hundred to their advertisers, fail somehow similarly to use color in *selling* their magazines to the public. Full-page newspaper adds in black and white naturally can't suggest for the *Saturday Evening Post* or *Collier's* the glamour and romance that color gives these magazines. Some day a color-using, color-selling magazine will come along with showmanship enough to identify itself as *THE* color magazine by never using anything but rather luxurious color in its own promotion. Then the publishing house, at least, would have caught up with the hundreds of loyal little cigarette salesmen who smoke and sample only their own brand.

Fred Rahr, a well known color engineer, dramatizing the technical knowledge that the ordinary white baseball reflects all the colors in continuously varying combinations, induced Fordham and Columbia, with the collegian's sense of sporting showmanship to try out a yellow ball. It got pages of good publicity —bids fair to catching on in the big leagues.

"Color" (Personality)

"Burst into Color" was the recent theme used by Lord & Taylor in ads, window displays, and folders. Lord & Taylor urged people to put more color in their homes, clothes, children, and even in their husbands' lives. This color promotion then was backed up with a "Vote For Your Favorite Color Contest." In the first five days of the contest 30,000 Ballots were cast.

"Color" in showmanship, furthermore, has a meaning that far transcends a mere matter of tints and shades. The "color" we now speak of may be good. Or it may be bad. But it is never neither. Never neutral, for example. Not all colored goods are colorful in the showmanship sense. Nor need color itself be always an essential part of colorful goods. One can have color—fire—verve—regardless of tincture. Avoid the drab. The colorless. Have some bright label of individuality. Don't be different from other people—negatively different—merely for the sake of being different. Be different for the sake of your own distinguishable identity. In other words, let all the rest be different from you.

One successful merchant has satisfied himself that distinction pays, good or bad. He finds that only those goods he himself likes or dislikes very strongly will sell readily. A manufacturer allowed a retailer to take several extremely bizarre suits. But insisted that the retailer set his own price because personally he had believed these models were too extreme to sell. The merchant took several dozen suits, tried two of them in his show windows with a random price of $14.95. He had them all sold within 24 hours. Women figured they were so bad they must be good. So wide is the range in human taste that every article that strongly attracts some will be distasteful to many. Utilize both extremes. Only the middle course is dangerous—the goods that will not strongly attract anybody.

Conflict

Three beverage makers in Milwaukee together sponsored a free six-day bicycle race. This conflict attracted 40,000 people who were not only fed appropriate advertising plugs about the three beverages through the P.A. system, but had to buy them in quantities to quench their long-drawn-out thirst. The Chevrolet Motor Company has seen its soapbox derbies grow into a world-wide conflict. With tryouts in every town, with elimination semifinals in 185 cities, the final event has assumed enough importance to rate a report over national radio hookup together with thousands of columns of newspaper publicity. It all started because one Chevvie dealer realized that conflict—even a contest of small boys in toy automobiles—makes news.

Conflict is the essence of those things that make for grown-up human interest. News is conflict.[1] We take at random the front page of a daily newspaper.[2] Headlines from Left to Right

[1] "Newspapers put on the world's greatest show. They reach more people than radio, stage and screen combined. You don't get up in the morning and say, 'I have to have a newspaper, or the bank will burn down, or the kids will get sick or my wife will leave home.' Nevertheless, 40,000,000 people read a daily newspaper—simply because of its grand showmanship. It mirrors the world-wide show we know as life." Zenn Kaufman, before the National Selected Morticians, San Antonio, Texas.

[2] The business departments of the daily papers have not kept pace with the editorial departments in respect to showmanship. Sandwiched in between the superior dramatics of the (a) advertisers and (b) the editors, the circulation and advertising departments of the newspapers themselves have consistently under-played their opportunities. *The Road Ahead for Newspapers* published by the Bureau of Advertising of the American Newspaper Publishers Ass'n, chides its members gently but

1. Byrd reaches South Pole
   (Man against elements of death)
2. Clipper in Hawaii with First Air Mail
   (Success in conflict with distance)
3. Cubs trim Dodgers
   (Conflict in play)
4. Republicans Will Start Campaign on Radio
   (Opening of a fight)
5. Nazis Raid New Territory
   (Physical conflict)
6. Six Power Parley on Arms
   (Talking about weapons of conflict. War is tops in conflict)

Energy

Ray Giles offers this bit of advice:

"Let your good intent be so great that it speaks for itself. Be direct. Speak out, in plain words. Do not be afraid to experiment, but, when you do so, admit it frankly. Earn confidence, merit cooperation, keep your eye on definite objectives and above all, DO SOMETHING."

A DO SOMETHING idea creates continuous profitable activity. Cigar & Tobacco Journal, for example, prints:

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firmly for losing ground the last 10 years. Good showmanship in one of its many forms may be one of the many answers.

"If newspapers ever needed showmanship, they need it today. Radio doesn't seem to be offering any circulation competition as yet, but its competition for the advertising dollar gets keener. And the very essence of radio is showmanship. Few businesses offer the showmanship opportunities the newspaper does. But the opportunities won't come knocking at your door too often if the door is kept barred against them."—T. S. Irvin in Editor and Publisher.

"Always on the lookout for good merchandising ideas, Mr. Shea of the Robert Simpson Co. Ltd. store in Toronto was attracted by Zenn Kaufman's account in Cigar & Tobacco Journal of a dealer who filled his windows with pipes of every size, hue and price and offered a prize to the man estimating most accurately the value of the display."

In Toronto, as expected, it appears, every pipe fancier and collector in town visited the shop along with the many others who were attracted by the contest.

Even the way in which a salesman carries his brief case means something to his success. Either it helps or it hurts him. Pens and pencils, sales tools, can be handled properly. Or badly bungled. In house-to-house selling, one of the first things a salesman must learn is to walk briskly up to the front door. If he saunters, it not only has a poor effect on his own mental attitude, but leads the housewife to believe he is not very intent about his business. Contracts can be presented with the grace of a forward pass or the abruptness of a plunge through center. For one important deal, a certain credit insurance salesman had Tiffany engrave a special contract. Every deal does not, of course, warrant an engraved contract. But every deal does deserve comparatively the serious, strategic consideration that in this particular instance brought forth the engraved contract.

Expensiveness

Ruskin once wrote:

Beautiful forms and composition are not made by chance nor can they in any material be made at small expense.

A certain typographer incorporated this quotation in his advertisements to defend his high prices by pointing out, with Ruskin's help, that the excellence of workmanship was worth more than cheap composition whose significance might soon be outworn. Kent Brushes feature a window containing a wonderful stock of expensive brushes. The showmanship comes in the printed card that explains the collection is priced at more than $5,000.

"Firsts"

People are interested in "firsts"; just as they are interested in "tops." People want to be the first to ride on the *Queen Mary*, etc. There is no news in seconds. Only bronze medals. The public wants first first. So it invariably wants the most! The most of *what*? The most of anything. The most of everything. As Ben Bernie might phrase it, "The mosta of the besta." Just as every man wants himself to be distinguished by some record, if only the "20 yard indoor backstroke swimming championship of the Bronx," so he would like to have everything he associates *with* clearly distinguished as the "most" of something.

Measure the most in terms of time, for example. In terms of time, you may choose or offer:

Earliest
Latest
Longest
Shortest

Frequentest
Fastest
Slowest

Similarly in terms of Space

Distance	Vertically:	Up	Across
	Horizontally:	Down	Around

In terms of Size

Volume	Biggest
	Smallest

In terms of Noise

Loudest
Softest

In terms of $

The most.

And so on, with almost any physical quality you can name.

Among all these possible superlatives, how can businessmen choose most wisely? Easy enough. Choose always the superlative that gives your customer the keenest sense of his own importance, the most acute impression of convenience, pleasure or benefit. Maybe you can use them all. For example, in advertising an airplane service you might, at least, use

A. Time

Leaves *late* in morning (saves time)
(" money)

Arrives *early* in afternoon
Goes *shortest* way
Most *frequent* (oftenest) service
Fastest route

B. Space
Covers *distance*
Long, comfortable seats

C. $
Cheapest, actually
Cheapest, as it saves time

D. Sound
Quietest in operation.

There you have a whole flock of *mosts* built right off your mechanical check list—each superlative directly focussed on the customer's convenience, pleasure, benefit.

Individuality

Human nature responds best to a clean-cut, distinctly individual appeal. Take again Charlie McCarthy, radio's prize dummy. He has, intrinsically, not the slightest connection with coffee. But he doubled Chase & Sanborn STORE window sales.

When you have a choice of appeals decide which is best, and deliberately subordinate the others. As we have several times noticed, simplicity—which in business practically implies a single appeal—and success come near being synonyms. All greatest successes in every line have been made on concentrated vivid single appeal. Complexity and *popular* success are practically a contradiction in terms.

Many stylists achieve astonishing momentary notice. By the design of one novelty or another, a great many of them arrive, one after another, at a great vogue over a short period. The best-remembered designer, the one followed for the longest period—and this applies equally to the wearer of those designs—is not the creator of, or wearer of, the most sensational clothes, no matter how smartly they may vary from season to season, but the one who best standardizes his style.

John Farson, a Chicago banker, always wore a red tie so that people would remember him. Campaigning as Governor of New York, Theodore Roosevelt knew exactly when and where to blossom out in his Cuba "Rough Rider" suit. Regardless of long-suffering photographers, Roosevelt all his life insisted on being snapped in action, never still in pose.

Few people can think of Charles Gates Dawes without his famous underslung pipe gripped between his teeth. Mark Twain, partly to get favorable attention for the bill on copyrights that Congress was considering, walked the streets of Washington in dead winter dressed in a white flannel suit. The resulting newspaper publicity not only flattered Mr. Clemens himself, but helped the bill with which he was concerned.

"Uncle Joe" Cannon, for eighteen consecutive years Speaker of the U. S. House of Representatives, made himself famous with cigars; and he always encouraged talk of his rusticity. When a fellow Representative taunted him on his first appearance in the

House with "oats in his pocket," Cannon answered, "I not only have oats in my pocket, but hayseeds in my hair."

Notice that there is no pretense about any of these men in the adoption of their colorfulness. All were careful to base their approaches on their own personal characteristics. Showmen all, they managed to combine a "new" bit of personality with the familiar characteristics in such a way as not only not to seem affected but to make all the rest of their characteristics harmonize with that special trick. Each went about building up his "trademark"—his external character—as shrewdly and determinedly as Benjamin Franklin worked on his internal qualities when substantial character counted much a century and a half earlier. Yet each of them shrewdly developed these personal preferences—idiosyncrasies, if you will—in order to distinguish him above the ordinary crowd of fellow mortals. Politically, of course, the venerable Speaker wanted to be recognized by voters as Uncle Joe Cannon—representative of the farmers. Mostly he wanted, like all the rest of us, to be recognized as Joe Cannon—a famous individual.

Life

E. J. Keilly had trouble getting tough department-store buyers to listen to his story of Zippers for infants' wear. He solved it by using his own little daughter as a live model. She was a four-star hit. When she dressed and undressed, buyers crowded

three deep to watch her. And buy. Stores immediately began to buy zipped infants' wear provided little Keilly went along, too, for demonstration.

This principle on a vast scale and with slightly different factors, was proved at the World's Fair by Standard Oil of Indiana. After a not-too-successful experiment with a splendid but conventional artistic portrayal of power, Standard put life into its gasoline by tying it up with live animals. The "live power" campaign reached its peak at the World's Fair where it showed to four million people. When a "live power" exhibit, in papier-mâché, toured the Middle West, two millions more saw it. In Wichita (Kan.), a town of 100,000, the parade was seen by 60,000.

Light

For those who want their psychology in a flowing form, let's start talking about "light," with the story of the little loggerhead turtles who immediately upon birth are able to head towards the ocean. No love of water is responsible. Their eyes are adjusted for attraction towards the brightest horizon. Which, of course, is regularly the sea. So light attracts men. There are 95,000 globes on Broadway. Noticeably bright lights in ordinary store windows stop six times as many people! One great sales manager found by experiment that simply turning a spotlight on a box intended for suggestions at his sales conferences would double the number of questions deposited therein.

Magic

Hyatt Bearing has scooped interest at industrial shows by using optical illusions as attention getters. One is a bearing that floats up and down in space. But Hyatt never lets these stunts run wild. A direct tie-up is established with a sign that says, "Can You Solve These Problems? They are just as easy to solve as any bearing problem is solved by using Hyatt bearings." Even a sales booklet is given away —"How Is It Done?" Even the booklet doesn't spill the beans, however. It tells a good sales story for Hyatt, and promises an explanation of the less important magic on the last day of the show.

Motion

When a motion display is stopped, tests by George Wellbaum showed that the number of people stopped is cut down 80 per cent. A still window on a confectionery item stopped 68 people in an hour. Moving the same display attracted 630.

Change itself is always news. Motion is always potential, if not actual, change. Drastic time-cuts on railroads, for example, which keep speeding up their schedules to hold customers against air and bus lines, are always news.

Spaulding Bakers, faced with competition from syndicate breads that tied up the circulation of money and sent it out of town, emphasized the fact that they were a home industry and worthy of the community's support. They adopted a vigorous

slogan. "Watch for the Spaulding Silver Dollars, keep them rolling." Then Spaulding paid off his entire payroll in silver dollars—7,000 of them—and the whole town talked every time anyone spotted a bright new Spaulding dollar rolling its way back to the bank.

Names

"Yeah Man" is the gorgeous name of a dining and dancing "spot" we noted in Harlem. A cafeteria chain called their fruit gelatin Marie Louise Tulip Cup and increased its sales. A manufacturer called for help in concocting ideas to sell pots in sets. "Hmmm," mused a Name Expert. "Have you a set of Quintuplets in your kitchen, madam?"

Some advertisers aren't as smart as the man Green who literally imitated his own name—some don't even recognize the value of a good name. All of us, can't, of course, be as lucky as Benjamin Moore (paints), falling comfortably into so poor and therefore so popular a pun as "Use Moore Paint." But more could use his strategy of getting more advertising in radio program columns by tying in the name of their radio character with their own product. Moore does this by calling his principal performer "Betty Moore." Moore salesmen further capitalize this advantage by carrying portable radios to catch broadcast flashes for the dealers while in the stores. For dealers who can't be reached while the program is on the air, they carry phonograph records of the program.

Personality

Easily the greatest element in business or professional success, is *personality.* Viewed from the opposite angle, showmanship may be merely personality in its larger public aspects. At any rate, however valuable showmanship may be in dealing with individuals, it is *indispensable* in dealing with people in large numbers. Personality may for the moment be further broken down for our purposes into at least four subdivisions:

1. Intrinsic personality
2. The personal *note* (in all contacts)
3. Personal appearance (which—speaking with the scientific calmness of one publicity man to another—should be classified under "Reciprocal exchange of publicity")
4. Personification of details.

Mickey Mouse has nibbled his way into the *Encyclopædia Britannica.* The editors of *Britannica* issued in their September bulletin an article called "The Story of the Animated Cartoon; from the Phenakistoscope to Mickey Mouse." This is not Mickey's first honor. Homage has been paid Walt Disney, his creator, by the British *Who's Who,* the Academy of Fine Arts in Buenos Aires, and the League of Nations Committee on Child Welfare.

Toothbrushes, shoes, juvenile toys and clothing, eating utensils, stationery—all have been enhanced by Mickey's presence. Some sixty concerns repro-

duce him in toys, book form, and in package covers for a variety of merchandise.

In the dozen years since Mickey's creation, Walt Disney, previously an unknown and often discouraged artist, has become a millionaire. Even with Snow White and Dopey breaking into the feature films with record breaking audiences, Mickey shows no signs of lassitude. His gate receipts are still tremendous. Solely as sales representative for Walt Disney creations, Kay Kamen Incorporated of New York has become an international organization with a branch office in every leading city of the world.

Although Mickey, with some of his relatives, has nibbled numberless entrances, he has not found it necessary to gnaw exits. Admitted to party or royal chamber, he continues to be welcome. King George V of England once refused to attend motion picture performances until assured of Mickey's presence.

Mickey's success has been the result of his individual, personal appeal. His relatives and neighbors, from Minnie Mouse to Ferdinand, have been deftly designed to serve as subordinate attractions to advance Mickey's charm. Mr. Disney has been keen enough to realize that a play can have but one hero. He has not presented a group of Mickey's friends, but individual friends *of* Mickey, *with* Mickey. These associates of Mickey's are, of course, sturdy individuals, too. But only to the extent of mimicking the animals they caricature, and in no way distracting from Mickey's histrionic dominance. They have served to heighten Mickey's value—not

to confuse his fame by an attempt to gain individual laurels. Mr. Disney realizes that all greatest successes have been made on concentrated single appeal. Use a personality when you've got it. If you haven't a personality—build one. Maud, the mule who inspired Mr. F. Opper to draw her in his comic strip, "And Her Name Was Maud," became the most famous mule in the world.

When Elisabeth Bergner's producers were promoting her appearance on the New York stage, they used glamour-stirring words rather than simple facts. They told the public of an actress who was both majestic and gaminlike. Two of her old movies were revived in motion-picture houses: one in which she portrayed Catherine the Great, the other in which she played a capricious young girl. They told us that she was a favorite of James M. Barrie, whose *Peter Pan* we still cherished, and that he was to write a play for her. The public was curious and expectant. They were ready to accept her stage performance long before they saw it.

The universal weakness for some sort of Peter Pan explains, basically, why it pays to put picturesque people into your promotion rather than rely on any form of intellectual appeal. W. L. Douglas became governor of the state, largely because he was so proud of the shoes he manufactured that he stamped his own picture on the sole of every shoe that left his factory. Aunt Jemima, Phoebe Snow—they were all good box-office folk although they never breathed air. Today advertisers have learned to bring the ad-

life people to life—as Philip Morris did with Johnnie, the bellhop. Johnnie has bounced right out of white space into real space. He walks! He talks! Yes, and he talks to millions over the radio. His personal appearance will pull crowds in practically any city.

Where would Christmas be without Santa Claus? What would the Wild West be without Kit Carson and Buffalo Bill? How could invention be dramatized without the stories of Edison and Ford? The great events—the great discoveries—the great ideas of history all stand out as a parade of *personalities.*

Witness once again the great popularity of comic-strip characters—of motion-picture stars—of radio sketch folks like Amos 'n' Andy, or Myrt and Marge. People like them. Lazy Dan does the selling for Johnson's Floor Wax on the radio. That is a good choice of character because if a lazy man likes the product, then it surely must be easy to use. Personality has even been introduced to the newsreels. We have Lowell Thomas now acting as "The Voice of Fox Movietone." The Jack Dempsey bar, the Shirley Temple[3] doll, the Dopey and Charlie McCarthy toys, Julius Kessler Whiskies; all these create interest. In New York, the Russek Twins brought personality into fashions and thousands watched these pretty girls in their imaginary travels around the city.

[3] Mickey has a rival as the world's greatest salesman. She sells not only dolls, but foods, wearing apparel, school supplies. Giant birthday cards, placed in department stores, were signed by thousands of young fans.

The personality concept can be applied to every phase of a business operation. Even railroads like the New York Central, whose all around showmanship is beginning to rival its operating efficiency. Nine-year-old Violet Kathleen Schmidt of Elkhart, Ind., the "Champion Train Waver of America," better known to thousands as "Curly Top," has waved herself steadily upwards into a 3,000 mile tour of major cities in the east and middle west, with trains, sleeping cars, diners, hotels, crowds and a host of other things Violet has always dreamed about. While in each of these cities she visits leading booksellers to autograph copies of a book with her as heroine.

Socony substitutes conventional abbreviations for first names, on the name badges of service station attendants. Often a living man isn't as real as he ought to be unless you remind the public somehow that he is real. Joe is realer than Joseph—nobody but a lawyer, minister or teacher would call a boy "Joseph."

We are more interested in people than in anything else. Particularly two people—ourselves and the other fellow. Let's turn first to ourselves—the one we like best of all our wife's relations. The appeal to a person's self-interest immediately starts a one-man show in the prospect's mind. With himself as the hero—in the center of the stage.

Personal Appearance

Personal appearance, meaning, of course, appearance in person, is the most popular of all forms of

actuality. Despite their abuse, testimonials are a handy and always popular form of personal appearance in a sort of televisional print. Of course, the testimonial in person is even better. One of the most spectacular of the recent stunts in showmanship was the famous transcontinental trainload of movie stars and electrical equipment which Eugene Whitmore records for General Electric. A brilliantly decorated train, with coaches equipped with demonstration kitchens, and loaded with movie stars such as Leo Carillo, Bette Davis, Lyle Talbot, Tom Mix and others, visited many towns and was thrown open for public inspection. Thousands of people thronged through the train, and visited the dealer's showroom where the stars were in the reception line. This train pointed up the General Electric sales campaign and took the dealers' minds off the bank closing which became nation-wide just when the train reached Cleveland on its eastward journey.

Marshall Field and Company, Chicago retail store, has a special department for putting showmanship into their actual selling. The book department under the directorship of Marcella Burns Hahner, is one of the largest book outlets in the country. Mrs. Hahner is famous for the showmanship she puts into the book department. Dozens of the most talked-of writers and authors lecture in her book department and autograph copies of their books for the customers. No celebrity is too big to be used by Mrs. Hahner.

In other departments, Field's stages stunts in per-

sonal appearance which would probably have caused the staid Field executives to gasp in horror a few years ago. Famous actresses, publicity-loving society women and other celebrities are inveigled into appearing at Field's to set a table in the most approved fashion, using, of course, all manner of the latest table decorations, tableware, etc. Harriet Higginson, a member of the store's promotion staff, went to New York and speared Amelia Earhart for an appearance in Field's sports costume section.

Personification

The Consolidated Gas Company once decided to use an imaginary "Phantom Professor" in its newspaper advertising. This Phantom Professor was to act more or less as a magician and was to tell the public of the magic of automatic refrigeration. A specific problem that faced the gas company was to introduce this advertising campaign forcefully to its own salesmen and appliance canvassers. A mystery approach was used. A sales contest was in preparation and in listing the standing of the men in the contest it was decided to include the name "Phantom Professor" among the names of the salesmen, always keeping him well up at the top and never explaining who the Phantom Professor was. Naturally all the men were curious to know the identity of this fellow who seemed to be running away with the sales contest. It wasn't until after several weeks of speculation that the company unveiled this charac-

ter coincidentally with the consumers' advertising campaign.

Westinghouse's Electric Man, too, is a good example of the use of *personification.* Here was electricity, an elusive, unshowable thing, presented in the most common physical manner—a man.

"Summer Slump" has come to life at sales meetings—but only for long enough to be refused admittance. He knocks on the door, claims he has been present at all summer sales meetings for 42 years. He doesn't get in.

Kopper's Coke uses a nameless gnome to illustrate the slogan, "Laugh at Winter."

Pictures

There are no limits to the use of pictures—visual selling! It works on all men. The same eye appeal that will sell a stick of chewing gum will also sell a million-dollar idea to Mr. Wrigley. Fred McKenzie, who sells trust service for the Central Hanover Bank, points out the need for visual selling in making blue chip sales. You have to own a million dollars before Fred will call you a suspect—much less a prospect. When visual sales methods were first suggested to Fred he shied at them in fear of ruining his dignity. Today he wouldn't be without his little "trapeze," as he calls it—an easeled pyramid affair that rotates charts. An eye picture on those charts does the job for Fred.

There must be a lot of men who are trying to sell insurance to Mr. Fuller who don't realize that he'll

fall for the same things that sell Fuller Brushes to millions.

Electrolux devised a simple face-to-face way to picture for its women prospects how much space was in their prospective new gas refrigerator. A large piece of paper was printed with space corresponding to the various shelf areas. This paper was placed on a kitchen table and the entire contents of the prospect's icebox were emptied onto the paper diagram. Look at the I. J. Fox Store where they had a Moth Banquet in the window. That attracted thousands of people and cluttered up the street. In the window were figures of moths eating into furs and they were all having a swell banquet. The Moth Banquet went over big.

Sex

Mr. Haldeman-Julius, America's greatest authority on sex appeal's comparative commercial value, says:

"One broad generalization can be made without any possibility of contradiction. High or low, rich or poor, read or unread, the interest in sex—the relationship between man and woman, the attraction of male for female and vice versa—is universal!"

One advertising man put sex appeal into selling stoves. He advertised "Listen to your favorite crooner while this stove cooks your meals."

A hardware merchant whose sale of electric fans vanished with the first frosts hired a pretty girl every afternoon to wash her hair in his show window. Then

she showed how quickly the electric fan dried her hair. Sale of electric fans returned immediately almost to summer levels.

Smell

The Muir Company in Lansing sold 1,800 pounds of peppermints in a day and a half by circulating a peppermint smell in the store. It was done by putting a few ounces of oil of peppermint in a bowl of water, dropping in some dry ice to make it boil, placing an electric fan nearby to get circulation.

A restaurant proprietor used an electric fan to blow the aroma from his coffee urn out into the street. The appetizing odor attracted passers-by who had not planned to eat there. Progress is being made in all directions in improving the smell of merchandise. Consider:

Imparting to silk stockings the fragrance of the lilac, the lily of the valley, an Evening in Paris, was a moderate success last year. But such perfumes will wash out. So the idea is not so popular now.

Rubber goods have been completely transformed by the arts of Givaudan-Delawanna, Fritzsche Brothers, Van Ameringen-Haebler and other producers of aromatics. Baby pants by Kleinert *et al.* no longer smell of rubber. Model elastic girdles have an added allure because of a Lanvin exquisite perfume called Rumeur. Brassières sell better because they have an aura of "My Sin." Hood not only removes most of the natural rubber odor but adds a sanitary smell to some of its products and fragrance to others—though not actually giving overshoes and insoles a whiff of bridal corsage. Silks are given flattering odors by Stehli and Skinner with moderate sales effect. Printing inks were deodorized. Glue-sized paper is made

to suggest heaven not hoof. Christmas cards breathe of pine forests. A chemist's dropper does it. The cost is small.

And now we come to fresh paint. Nobody likes it. Especially women, who would love to paint that breakfast nook furniture but hate to smell it for two days—and hotel and office building owners who hate to lose two days' profits on newly painted rooms. Maybe these women would buy more paint if it weren't for the smell. Maybe the hotel men would, too. So something is being done about it. America is about to lose the historic stench of fresh paint.

Already Pittsburgh Plate Glass Co. has deodorized flat wall paint and some of its enamels. Sales have increased—although it must be admitted that tough-nosed, veteran paint salesmen who sell "quality" to dealers, never mind about the odor, have not enthused much about deodor. They aren't worrying about women buyers. But the company is. It tried out various paint smells on about 100 women in several parts of the country. Even tried making paint smell like "parfum des fleurs" but finally concluded there are too many noses to please and fell back upon merely blanketing the smell of paint and adding a neutral pleasant scent. Results were good. Other paint companies are not asleep at the switch.

Thus, one after another, some of America's most noisome olfactory stimuli are removed. And merchandise sales are improving. Women just love pleasant odors (and who doesn't?) (*Sales Management*).

Nearly every drugstore has a sample display of Coty's perfume on its counters. Women are invited to smell all and to sample the kind that most *appeals* to them.

Sound

The eloquence of sound is illustrated in the story of the cloak-and-suiters riding in the streetcar dur-

ing the depression. One sighed—one of those deep, mournful 1930 sighs. The other looked at him, finally said, "You're telling *me*!"

Radio stores are lucky. They have a natural excuse for making noise. It isn't hard to see created a considerable nuisance were all store windows wired for sound. That, however, is remote. In the meantime there is still left, in certain kinds of windows, considerable room for ingenious and entirely inoffensive use of music, sound effects, even monologues and dialogues. Wiring is surprisingly inexpensive. So are a microphone and a loud speaker. So ——

For Santa Claus windows, if cotton snow for the eye, why not a tiny constant "Jingle Bells" for the ear? For windows with trousseaux or brides' wear, why not a scarcely discernible "Wedding March" as a musical theme song? Every phonograph store could furnish the record.

For *any* window, why not a gay, soft-spoken sixty-second sales skit preceded by a well-modulated fanfare and followed by a quiet invitation to enter? It has been worked with phonograph records beneath counters, within the store, why not in the windows?

Don't vote "No" on this too vehemently. Wait till you have counted ten. Remember that despite all their modern bright-light marquees and passionate lithographs, motion-picture houses still find they can pull in more people out of a passing crowd with a six-foot husky in uniform repeating nothing more spectacular than "The show is just starting." Old-

timers will recognize this—a Broadway adaptation of the old Seventh Avenue "puller-in."

The practical value of sound was probably first discovered by a squeaking wheel that needed grease. Now, even store strike pickets are being wired for sound, it seems. Pickets secure more attention while talking as they walk.

Don't let the band get you! The pacifist is more afraid of the brass band than of anything else. In the war, more men were put into uniforms by bands than by conscience, uniforms, pretty nurses and lack of employment together!

Roxy was always a good showman. Long before sound pictures, Roxy was always contriving ways to enliven the old-fashioned movies with sound effects. He put over one scene in the engine room of an ocean liner very effectively by running a wire down to the power plant in the theater basement and piping up to his audience the dull chug of the theater's own turbines. That half of his audience never consciously heard the sound did not at all detract from the resulting realism.

Bond salesmen, selling power company securities, would take prospects to waterfall sites and let them stand listening to the roaring fall of the water. Then take them into the power plants and let them listen to the whirring of the turbines.

Sales meetings hit the last note right when they close with the singing of "Auld Lang Syne."

We mentioned the "March of Time" type of presentation that Harry Alexander used at sales meet-

ings. Here are a few sound effects used in one instance—where they wanted to convey the idea that the cabinet plant at Hamilton (Ohio) was idle.

Announcer: Hamilton, Ohio (slowly).
Music: A waltz (dies out slowly).
Sound: Birdies singing.
Announcer: "At Hamilton, Ohio, all is quiet and peaceful as the birdies rest in the rafters of the plant. Spiders build their webs from beam to beam above the galley cabinets."
Sound: Yawning.
Announcer: "The clerks stretch lazily at their desks—waiting for some excuse to open the dust-covered ledgers."

Pepsodent shows what sound alone can do, in taking Amos, a character who never lived, and creating a give-away premium out of an autographed radio script of the program in which he is married.

An autographed copy of the Christmas night script on which Amos was air-married and photo of Amos 'n' Andy, with data of career on the reverse side, offered by Pepsodent over NBC for a 10-day period, the listener being required to send one of company's toothpaste or powder boxes.

On New Year's eve, instead of the usual skit, the team broadcast a personal talk to ethereal audiences. In addition to a report of their cross-country travels and observations during 1935, it carried a plea for safe driving—accident figures quoted—and a crime-does-not-pay brief, based on what Amos 'n' Andy had seen and had been told on a tour of J. Edgar Hoover's bureau in the Department of Justice at Washington. Duo closed by introducing to dialers their announcer, organist and control engineer. (*Variety*)

Symbolism

The word "Prosperity" elected McKinley; and "16-1" nearly elected Bryan. People like labels bet-

ter than ideas. Until they coagulate about parties, policies and politics, whether pro or con, are conspicuously futile and generally feeble. Even better than words. Comfortable slogans such as "back to normalcy," "safe for democracy," "square deal" are far more satisfying to most people than any inquiries whatever into the implications of those terms. Sam Blythe, commenting on this universal American habit, once observed that the less anybody knows about a given subject, the more vigorously is it christened with a big word. Then everybody begins to talk glibly about that word.

Our old friend Ben Sweeney, a somewhat graceless young real estate salesman, used when he deemed the moment psychologically ripe, to turn his back on his prospect, and kick with a vigorous questing toe the surface of the prospective quarter-acre plot. As the customer turned to see what might be going on, Ben would bend; and with a final tug unearth a rusty old horseshoe. He made no mention whatever of his find, scarcely showing it to the customer, quickly resuming the conversation. In nine cases out of ten, however, the prospects themselves would proceed to close the deal. This was a bit more subtle and dramatic than most such selling. But that was working on $5,000 real estate units back in the days when psychology was more honored in the practice than in the theory.

Thus concludes our examination of some fifty elements that make shows draw crowds. Somewhere in each element is a fundamental which, properly in-

jected into most commercial situations, will help pull in customers. Even so, we have up to now been dealing with basic elements mostly as a theory. Fragments so far discussed are by no means conclusive. Succeeding chapters turn our subject strictly to a practically applied point of view. We hope to take the various problems of business, the orthodox phases and stages of promotion, as such, and analyze the ways in which the various elements of showmanship have been and can be used to meet them.

Any project for showmanship must naturally start with the product itself—its conception and its design. Streamline trains, as introduced on various American railroads, sold more tickets not only for themselves but for the older ordinary trains as well. "Streamline" designing may go down into history as the most notable industrial characteristic of the early XXth century: and by no means its least contribution will be the designing of goods pointed at both ends—towards the customer!

5

START RIGHT FOR SHOWMANSHIP

Arthur Murray, after much experimenting, announces that if the thing you advertise is basically wrong you can't save it, no matter how skillfully you advertise. Which is equivalent to our earlier statement that showmanship will *add* nothing to a proposition. Mr. Murray is far more than a successful dancing teacher. Like Ely Culbertson, he is one of America's outstanding experts in skillful, profitable, specialized, large-scale public contacts. So take Arthur Murray's word.

Incidentally, Mr. Murray could no doubt assure you that the cost of finding out what people *do* want is considerably less than the cost of selling them what they don't want. And immeasurably safer. Perhaps you were wise enough originally to design a vital selling point into your goods. Or had the ingenuity or good fortune immediately thereafter to discover one. At any rate, as a wise businessman, you won't start seriously to promote until, in one way or another, you shall have found some such showmanlike *contact* with the public.

Turning, then, to the practical application of showmanship, you will observe that there are three general stages in the making and moving of goods at which a far-reaching objective imagination may be found most profitable. These are:

1. Conception of a product, including design
2. Presentation of the product, including packaging and naming
3. The sales promotion of the product.

The old-fashioned showman would concentrate his talents wholly on the last and, of course, obvious field, whereas our first chapter definitely commits this book to a broader, more modern viewpoint. Our showmanship, then, will start in product conception: opening the entire business with the initial intention of pleasing the customer.

The *Buyers' Manual* of the N.R.D.G.A. says that goods bought right are half sold. What a message for a manufacturer! A sales tip direct from his retailer. Buying right, from the retailer's viewpoint, can mean only one thing. Handing the merchant only the articles the public is already ready for. If properly advertising a product consists of telling the public compelling things, then the business of building these compelling things conspicuously into the product should be started at the earliest possible moment.

Certain fortunate professions need never gamble on somebody's being smart enough to sell their stuff. Nor fear going up a blind alley in designing their

product. Into this class every intelligent business will sooner or later fall. Meantime, only those trades and professions that quickly and unmistakably "check" their current fortunes through some form of "box office" have the satisfaction of seeing their skill directly reflected in sales support. Automatically this leads all thinking directly towards the immediate buyer. Prevents manufacturing loss. And cuts selling expense and energy.

Contrast the job of a magazine editor, for example, with the job of a radio director. The radio man keeps on so long as he pleases the man who pays him. The editor keeps on only so long as he pleases the men who pay the man who pays him. The successful editor, then, may be a model in showmanship for any sort of producer putting out goods for large-scale consumption. The editor, fortunately, can never forget for a single restful second the wants, needs, desires, personal habits of his readers.

So the editor, at least, is set. The rest of us sometimes require a happy accident to awaken to the most effective way to sell. A chain-store manager found he was able to turn candy, which had formerly moved very slowly, into fast-selling stock, when a spotlight arranged for a special display at another counter happened to spill over a bright spot on his candy counter as well. A surgical instrument salesman, too. He had been trying, with no great success, to place a line of nonbreakable glassware only to discover by accident what he should have figured out long before. Demonstrating in a prospect's office, the

instrument fell one day off a desk. Everyone came running to pick up the pieces. But the instrument was intact. The prospect immediately gave an order for half a dozen. Thereafter the enlightened salesman proceeded accidentally to shove the instrument off the desk in every office he visited.

On the other hand, an enterprising sales executive obviously cannot afford to await an accident to reveal his vital contact point with the public. While getting this basic information, the live executive sends out, or, better still, goes out himself, and asks people questions.

Adolph Zukor, who built up Paramount Pictures, used to stand night after night in the lobby. Loew spent most of his time counting customers. Or talking to them. Walter Strong, publisher of the famous Chicago *Daily News*, built up a typical cross section of his public with whom he used to keep in touch. The *Woman's Home Companion* has a new visiting Associate Editor chosen from among the readers every month, and any number of Associate-by-Mail editors. Macfadden invoked a large jury of actual readers to choose stories for *True Story*. One New York sales manager, personally and without any extra help, completed in one day a nation-wide investigation, so to speak, by covering Pennsylvania Station and Grand Central Terminal and getting the opinions of people from 32 states waiting there for trains.

For nearly every businessman, who will work at his trade half as hard as the newspaper editor works

at his there are available without too great travail answers to any question that will enable him to build his trade as soundly as an editor builds his circulation.

Nevertheless, most American businessmen still do business as airily as the Minnesota farmer who, to repeat once more the old story, wrote the U. S. Department of Agriculture:

> Please don't send me any more books. I don't farm as good as I know how now.

Or the colored elevator boy who resisted the solicitation of a home study course salesman by saying: "Learn more? Why, bud, I'se not even gettin' paid fo' as much as I knows now."

Somewhere, on almost any commercial subject, we venture to repeat, is easily available a vast mass of information. Take "color," for example. Women generally favor red; men, blue. That is a safe rule, pretty well understood. Yet in the color statistics Mr. Ketcham has gathered for the New York Museum of Science and Industry, we find that from 1928 to 1933 color preference in automobiles has varied greatly. In the brighter days, 1928, green was most popular. In 1933, black. Which change Mr. Ketcham, of course, observes, was owing to the prevailing spirit of conservatism and the then more or less universal desire to be inconspicuous.

(Many readers may have discovered by this time, or even a few pages back—if they have unsympathetically applied our formulæ to what they make

—that intrinsically they have little to offer their public. That is, little outside of straight, unadorned utility of one degree or another. Which, instead of the first conclusion that they can't utilize showmanship, might bring their study of showmanship to the point "How to Sell What You Haven't Got.")

So, where neither original design, accident nor research points out a natural sparking point of contact inherent in the goods or the proposition, there's nothing left to do but to invent a vital point—the best one can devise—and inject. Scott's Tissue frequently finds this course difficult. Yet it takes a full-page advertisement showing one giant machine with an apt statement that the machine pictured is only one of the group of six that produces one-third of all America's toilet tissue today.

The Corona typewriter, for another example, devised an "animal" keyboard, which makes correct touch-typing almost automatic from the kindergarten up through any adult age. A certain merchant had a felt hat for women, obtainable in many colors. Good showmanship tells the merchant he must find something which will differentiate this hat in some degree from all similar hats. He knows women are interested in *variety*. These hats, it happens, may be *worn five different ways*. So the merchant shrewdly emphasizes this variety by having his advertisements show the *same* model wearing the *same* hat in *five ways*. An enterprising farmer, to get still farther afield, persuaded all his neighbors that they should all paint their farm buildings in the same sea-

son. This showmanlike use of paint added approximately $10 an acre to the selling value of those farms. Buyers, seeing the lavish use of paint, decided, since the farmers were so prosperous, that spot of land must be particularly fertile.

Just to give further encouragement to those whose goods require synthetic showmanship, we'll cite two or three companies that went a step further than that. They sold the public the *handicaps* of their product. One famous health soap, some prejudiced say, fairly "stinks." Yet, they advertise, "If it hasn't that clean smell, it isn't Lifebuoy." The old Hoover vacuum cleaner, if left running in one spot would tear a hole in a rug. Still they bragged, "Beats as it Sweeps as it Cleans."

Showmanship, to repeat in conclusion, will never *add* to a *proposition*. But if an analysis of your product doesn't reveal a built-in feature, then start now to get a built-up one. It's easy. Find out something people want regardless of your product and then show how your product gives that. There's no sex in a bottle of Vitalis. But sex is how it's sold. Of course, the makers of Vitalis would love to be able to say, "Drink Vitalis and have more sex appeal." Unfortunately, even if you didn't poison yourself, Vitalis couldn't give you sex appeal, through the stomach. But used on your hair—oh—that's different! It improves your appearance. Thus a million men spend a quarter or so for a bottle, first, possibly considering whether to spend the quarter thus for sex or to spend the same quarter getting their sex

stimulation from the lovely ladies on the silver screen. Either way—a show-element, this time *sex*, is the cue to interest.

Because our treatment of this vital point has been light, don't be misled. Because the customers' likes and dislikes are now coming to be recognized as the basis of profitable business, the whole industrial setup has been changed. The old "primary" industries . . . steel, copper, coal . . . have become secondary or even tertiary industries. The primary industries patently are those whose finished goods decide how far the raw material foundries shall be able to operate.

H. G. Weaver has remarked that one of the chief duties of his General Motors Consumers' Research is to find out how much advanced design the public is in fact ready to accept at any given moment. There is the real showman's position toward conception of a product—starting designing at the point where people are prepared for a change and changing only so far as they are then prepared to go.

And finally, to prove how utterly the sale depends on the buyer's attitude rather than the seller's, here's an example of two identical products—reaching two kinds of people by the simple device of a different kind of *pricing*: Our gallant old friend, Charles E. Finlay, used to design new sales interest into apartment houses by having two identically similar apartments, say, directly across the hall from each other, vary in price as much as 10 per cent. Always he would find one sort of customer who would notice

the difference, carefully compare the two apartments and rush to rent the one at $95 before anyone else should notice an apparent mistake in pricing. On the other side, with equal frequency, would bob up another customer debonairly ready to pay $10 difference in order to have the highest-priced suite on the floor. One, of course, was buying a bargain—the other buying "swank."

Take another light, but vital, example, the *name* of the product: In the old days a manufacturer would start with some abstract brand name, hoping he could like Victor and Eastman, turn it into a generic name for a product.

A reasonable procedure, but expensive. Today they start with the public's accepted name for the class of product and, without deviating too far from it, attempt to patent a name, as, for example, Crax, Radiola. I (kmg) once knew a man who had a magnificent name for a product. ("Mother's Love," it was.) Last I saw him a dozen years ago, he was still looking for some product—any—to live up to the name. Silly as it sounds, he was nearer right than most of us. If all merchandise design started with a *name* that suggested the greatest consumer interest and thence worked back into metal or wood, there would be less risk and expense in selling. Thus, instead of bucking popular conception of a product, the smart advertiser rides *with* it, content to let the public believe that whatever they want he *is*.

This ability to present *your* proposition in terms of the buyer's attitude cuts your promotion effort

in half. Calling a fur coat a "Rumble Seat Coat" stepped up sales immediately. Calling the assembly place of a sales convention "Camp Merchandise" sold everybody immediately the idea of a new and different kind of meeting. And calling brassières "Scandals" goes daringly all the way—putting into a piece of wearing apparel the bluntest sex implications.

When Macy's presents its modern furniture exhibit under the name of "Forward House," you have a simple but adequate example of presentation from the buyer's viewpoint. Fundamentally, "Forward House" suggests something from the buyer's viewpoint. Consider in this same light the difference between

Proposition	*Ordinary Name*	*Showman's Name*
Radio Program	Music for Today	Cheek to Cheek
Perfume	L'Origan	Temptation
Brassières	Kops Bros.	Sensations
Underwear	B. V. D.	Scanties
Candy	H-O Drops	Beechies
Auto	Buick	Roadmaster
Contest	Model Building Contest	Fisher Craftsmen Guild
Training Material	Instruction Manual	"Get the Business" Kit

Even with a good name and a good package, there's usually lots still to be done in the presentation of intangibles. Or repackaging the presentation of familiar products to fit some special *use* for which they are being sold. Frigidaire has a handsome gift box and key for making a ceremonious presentation of a Frigidaire as a gift. If live pigs can be colorfully packaged (and even that's been done), anything can. A man who sells foreign stamps now puts

them up in little mail sacks. A cider bottler gives us an apple-shaped jug. Even to a gift certificate (the dullest imaginable gift of all) Knox gives hat-realism by putting the certificate in a tiny replica of a regular Knox hatbox. A western gas company uses an old transport plane as a filling station. Neon lights and whirling propeller attract attention aplenty. The airplane suggests speed.

Packaging, in itself a tremendously helpful selling technique adequately described in several excellent books,[1] again presents an opportunity to start from the buyer's side. Gotham wrapped sheer stockings in valentines, or on backs of toy dogs, and boosted sales immediately. One of your authors (zk), writing in *Printers' Ink*, describes the factors that helped:

(1) *Plussing the sale.* One Easter little baskets were offered. In the straw lay five or six eggs with stockings inside. Many people who contemplated buying only one pair of stockings bought more because of this packaging.

(2) *Combating price slashing.* Here is a little Scotty dog with a pair of stockings on his back. When this dog is presented, he is the center of attraction, taking attention momentarily away from the merchandise—and from price. He adds 75¢ to the price of the stockings, but pleasure to the person receiving them.

(3) *Adds salability.* Hosiery by itself is not especially interesting merchandise, but when it is put in a wineglass and a lovely box, it immediately becomes something unusual. Instead of being prosaic, it becomes an expression of thoughtfulness.

(4) *As a gift from men.* Of course there's always the story about the man who walked into the department store and

[1] Larrabee, *How to Package for Profit,* Harper & Brothers.

when he asked to see some women's hosiery, was greeted with "Certainly, are these for your wife or would you like to see something a little better?" Hosiery by itself has always been an obvious gift and yet a gift without distinction from a man to a woman. Its easy exchangeability, its sure need have recommended it as a practical gift. At the same time these qualities have made it over-practical. To a woman a man doesn't know well, it borders on a gesture of over-friendliness; to a woman he does know well, it seems a dull gift, however practical.

These packages, these timely footballs or valentines, are a solution to the problem. They add a touch of romance to the gift. They make it interesting, seemingly less practical. They look a lot more money, while costing only a little more.

(5) *Better windows.* These bouquets, these bunnies, these little mailmen with stockings, make good window displays. It is not impossible to make a pair of hose, alone, an object of interest, but the display takes on an added appeal and novelty when the hosiery is shown being carried on the backs of little Scotty dogs or in little flower pots. The result has been not only better hosiery windows—but more.

6

SHOWMANSHIP IN ADVERTISING

Comic-strip style in advertising may or may not be the highest type of advertising. Certainly it represents the purest use of showmanship in newspaper or magazine mediums. Without the help of 72-point display or hand-lettered headlines, it achieves attention purely through its intrinsic attraction. It sells by pleasing—which is proved by the success of Lux and Camel who have used it consistently for years. Perfect example of low-pressure selling by some happy humility expressing the virtues of a product naïvely in a conversational way that at least tries to approach the everyday talk of the users instead of through the high-pressure attraction technique of the advertising crafts.

The best proof of its innate value is the fact that as soon as you leave simon-pure comic-strip style you begin more and more to need the *physical* attraction forcers. Even human interest takes a half-page photo to get as much attention as a tiny comic character. Unless—and until—you put into your ads the same things—or some established substitute—

as you find in the comics, you risk some degree of failure with the public. This "talkie technique" involves, of course,

1. plot
2. conflict
3. suspense
4. variety
5. life
6. personality
7. personification.

Mickey Mouse is the triumph of personification over Life—proving that hope, ambition and attractive dreams exceed the wildest limits of actual human possibilities. Newspaper comic strips prove the same thing, feeding us emotionally the simple things that even the news of all the world can't provide.[1]

The things the product can provide are the things to put in your headlines, illustrations and text.

You don't buy a paper—you buy news.
You don't buy glasses—you buy vision.
You don't buy circus tickets—you buy thrills.
You don't buy awnings—you buy shade.
You don't buy membership in your Association. You buy cooperation of the most able businessmen in the industry.[2]

French Line gives us the Longest Gangplank in the World, thus providing France. Singer Sewing Machine gives us a $100 wardrobe for $29.75. Far

[1] That's why prize contests flourish. Hope springs eternal in human breasts. Could any bit of sales strategy want any more convincing proverbial confirmation? A contest, like a premium, offers something for nothing. A challenge, a conflict, a bit of entertainment.

[2] Bulletin of Kansas City Association.

afield from boats and machinery? No. It is simply phrasing merchandise in terms of what people want —telling them frankly about the show you know they want to see. They want atmosphere—French Line gives it to them. They want expensive clothes. Singer shows how to get them without the expense.

All the elements of showmanship, you will find, have been successfully applied to advertising. For a few examples:

Motion: The Travelers Insurance Company advertises annuities by mail with a patent folder which, opened, actually *moves* a small paper-soldier letter-carrier up the path to the porch of a waiting annuitant. "Fine," you say, "for direct mail, but I can't get motion into magazines." Right. But only partly right. For you can do it pictorially—psychologically —vicariously.

Beechnut approximates motion with a five-inch single-column newspaper add that resembles a woman's shopping list. There are a number of blank spaces for the woman to fill in. With, of course, Beechnut products at the top, and at the bottom too. A soap manufacturer gets real motion in magazines with an actual-size outline of a woman's hand. The copy asks the woman to place her hand over the outline and see what damage harsh dishpan soaps have done to its beauty.

Personality: The Atlantic Coast Line shows a picture of a young woman who says, "I am your hostess." All testimonial advertising, of course, capitalizes the personality interest.

Timeliness: When the Fleet was in San Francisco, the Adolph Dairies showed a series of naval signaling flags. But not content to use an abstract attention getter unsupported by direct selling, they went on to tell how milk is prescribed food in the navy. Here, too, was *authority.*

Humor: Billy B. Van sold his splendid pineneedle soap with a columnist's wisecrack style in his little ads—and got results. He alternated his witticism with arguments for his soap.

Mystery: Packard presents a new car with a sheet of thick white cloth thrown completely over it.

Conflict: A shoe sale headline, "There's Trouble in Brockton," leads the reader into a story of manufacturer's disaster. Joe Katz, who wrote the copy years ago, knew from his abundance of department-store experience that the reason for a price is as important as the price itself. A sale must always be explained: "50% off" doesn't pull as well as "Fire sale—40% off." So he presents a *reason* for his sale —with *conflict* interest.

Action: George M. Cohan used to say of playwriting, "If you haven't got the audience guessing between the first and second acts, there's not a nickel in your show." This analysis stands equally true in writing advertising copy. If, in writing an advertisement, you fail to get into the headline, subheadline or first paragraph a fairly direct statement of what your proposition will do for the reader, you have lost so much of your sales opportunity that it is seldom really worth while to try to recapture the opportu-

nity by including that offer even as far along as the second paragraph.

Dramaticness: "Do What the Doctors Do When They Don't Feel Up to Par." This is the headline for an advertisement for Artie McGovern's book on the *Secret of Keeping Fit.* Pictures and testimonials by Babe Ruth and Johnny Farrell are included in the copy. It ranks with the famous "Don't Tell Me You Never Had a Chance!" series of the International Correspondence Schools which have been used more or less continuously since 1915. There Mr. Barrett said: ". . . up to very recent years, did a good job for us whenever scheduled. The appeal is so fundamental, the illustration so striking, putting the idea over so quickly, and that with slight change of faces, locale, etc., I think it would continue to pull for us at any time and under any condition."

The Monument Mills at Housatonic (Mass.) confesses that the moment dramatic interest was added to a monthly mailing the response was multiplied thirty times.

We like shows because we picture ourselves in them. Direct mail comes very near putting the reader in the show. Gulf Oil does it with the Latz letter which starts with a picture of a gas station attendant holding up the *actual license* of the man who gets the letter. Just picture yourself getting a letter that actually shows your own plate, right number . . . right colors! Are you interested? You are. And this illustration not only shows your plate, but, the attendant is saying, "Mr. *Yourname,* etc."

A letter enclosing a card of introduction to a personal shopper who is on duty waiting to "Rush you through your list and see to accurate delivery" is issued by Macy's to make Christmas shopping easier for a select list of businessmen. Aimed at the same sort of specialized personal service to a particular list has come to me (kmg) on a faculty list along with the real professors a splendid selling letter starting:

I have often thought it must be grand to have a holiday *three months long. . . .*

Gently this letter slips into the suggestion that extra money is often convenient to finance a professor's holiday that lasts a whole summer—and winds up offering to lend that money for an appropriate percentage!

C. A. Patterson, publisher of American Restaurant and School & College Cafeteria, put some real showmanship into a mailing designed to sell advertising space for School & College Cafeteria. His message discussed the change since the time when the old fashioned dinner pail used to go to school. To get attention and interest for his story the mailing was sent out in an actual dinner pail and his story was printed on a paper napkin.

By entertaining psychologically with *human interest* or physically through the *appearance* of copy —either way you double results.

Ediphone promotion follows a human interest pattern with such headlines as "You Know Something

We Don't Know." The boys who write this Edison stuff, Green and Brodie, are novelists (see *Cosmopolitan,* February, 1936, "Love on the Run," later filmed by M-G-M). They put the same literary keenness into every bit of appliance promotion that goes into a $3 best seller. One mailing piece, for example, gives a new turn to the old caption "What's Wrong with These Pictures?" Then follow, one on a page, eight photos of situations in an office. Nothing at all, except no dictating equipment! At the back of the booklet is a series of explanations of the situations, each explanation showing how an Ediphone could avoid wasted time. There's dramatic interest in each of these photos. There's dramatic interest in a white silhouette of a man seated at a desk with a caption reading "Is This You?" Prospects open the folder to be asked "Are you the man who finds himself wishing he had more time to *think* about business problems?" etc. And then the folder goes on to tell how Ediphones meet this problem.

Outdoor Advertising: Outdoor advertising has had the need for showmanship forced upon it. With no time for logic it must use an emotional appeal. And a necessarily short, dynamic suggestion. Working in 5-second flashes, it must be simple. At small extra cost, much of it can use motion. Finally, in competition with nature, it must be colorful. With scarcely a choice but to adopt this sure-fire favorable formula, those who have failed in their use of outdoor advertising can usually blame nobody but themselves.

Outdoor advertising comes rightly by any showmanship it possesses, for the industry was once no more than a department of the circus and show business. It's a question whether outdoor advertising made the circus or the egg came before the hen. Certainly the two came into the public eye arm in arm. Diminutive Barney Link was the first man to offer one of those old-time poster stands to a regular commercial advertiser.

Outdoor advertising was originally no nest of angels. Barney Link, the rumor ran, never hired a man over five feet high—so his men could always hide behind convenient ash cans when sniping. Outdoor advertising has gone a long way since then. From the old 8-sheets on barns to the modern 24-sheet and electric spectacular is a fifty-year jump but a simple transition. Today—the outdoor advertiser is no longer dependent on chance for circulation as was one early advertiser whose poster was put on both halves of a huge gate, visible in its entirety only when the gate was closed. Harry O'Mealia still has a letter from his father's partner, Pete Speare, to his father, offering to get out of the business so both could eat. Today Pete could live nicely on what O'Mealia gets from a single illuminated bulletin at the mouth of the Holland Tunnel. Present-day outdoor advertising maintains the showman's pace. Its art continues to hold its public. And in its more spectacular forms, its blazing neon and action units continue to give to the roofs of build-

ings the same things the public pays money to see on the stage.

"Stix Nix Hix Pix"—thus ran a startling headline clear across the top of that admirable professional publication *Variety*. Transliterated it read, "Sticks (say) nix (to) hick pictures." Translated, it meant that some substantial owner of motion-picture houses in Iowa had stated that the small country towns refused absolutely to patronize minor second-rate shows, especially those with a Broadway or Hollywood "angle." They would get *David Copperfield, It Happened One Night, Little Women, Top Hat*—or they would take nothing.

Kate Smith, Bing Crosby, and Gracie Allen are popular because they make people feel pleasant and easy. Jack Benny and Ben Bernie—the joke's kept always on them. They never "tell" the audience. Major Bowes finds his show even more popular because his audience escapes completely a patronizing tone. More than a sense of equality, they find *themselves* not only a part of the show—but the superior part—actual judges of its actors!

Tested personality—the quality of pleasing—is the one sure-fire investment in radio. Possibly the only sure-fire, except established well-loved music.

Jack Benny and possibly three others (Will Rogers was one) could be bought profitably at practically any price. They will carry their audience with them. Thirty others, lower in the field, may be sufficiently established to make a safe investment at prevailing radio rates. After that it's a gamble. The odds are

in favor of the advertiser who scouts new, young, outstanding pleasant personalities and develops his own stars.

Anybody who checks—from *any* artistic angle—the fairly low "quality" of the spectacularly successful programs year after year can't retain much faith in the powers of superior rendition. Money spent on extra time arranging and rehearsing something known *particularly* to interest a *given* audience probably won't be lost. Otherwise it's pure swank somebody has to pay for. How well a thing is done is practically never the important question in mass audiences, but What is it? and Who did it?

One of the great paradoxes on advertising, by the way, is radio's commercial "plug." For years advertisers fought tooth and nail for newspaper "publicity" in the closest possible resemblance to legitimate editorial material. Every editor's mail is filled with tons of press "flimsies." Advertising managers are kept busy putting a warning "Adv." on plain-clothes commercial copy.[3]

The same advertisers rush to the opposite extreme in their radio advertising, where editorialized matter would not only be natural but most welcome to everybody. From the very beginning, the very nature of radio demanded a simple commercial script tactfully eased into in the same vein as the entertainment feature—exactly the editorial advantage so coveted in the newspaper. Professing, in this case, to consider themselves dramatic producers

[3] See "What About Radio," by Kenneth Goode, Harpers, 1938.

whose benevolence would be rewarded out of sheer gratitude, radio advertisers not only phrased their plugs in dull and matter-of-fact language, but, for some strange reason, pitched their commercial announcing in an entirely different, deliberately inharmonious key. So, where every condition suggested a smart, suave, smooth, sophisticated blending of advertising with amusement, the early radio shows kept the two elements blatantly apart, commingling as oil and water. In the hands of a few good showmen this is gradually breaking. Soon some great showman will dramatize his advertisements as his entertainment.

In an advertisement for the Columbia Broadcasting System is the statement, "The whole family listens—and does what it's told—when the telling is as easy to take as the family's favorite CBS programs." That may be. And often is. But, heretical as it may sound, the modern radio show seldom proclaims itself ideal for the advertiser who pays for it. It is either not good enough

Or is too good.

Mostly too good.

Like a lot of other ambitious advertisers long before business took to the air, the radio showsters overlook the fact that even if you can get and hold every tiny scrap of man's fleeting attention, the ideal maximum adds up to only 100 per cent. No possible combination, or succession, of excitations can make the attention divided among them total more than 100 per cent. And, as all psychologists know, unless

intelligently sustained at just the right places, attention is more likely to drop alarmingly to 90, 80, 70, 60, 50 or 40 per cent. Even worse, it *scatters.*

Personalities, not naturally related to the product, create so much interest in themselves, as straight entertainment, that they quite eclipse the simple commercial announcements. If you get yourself into a lather of interest over Cantor and Rubinoff, isn't it possible that a moment later when a commercial plug comes through you are still thinking about the entertainment? Sometimes we think a good orchestra playing a pleasant music quite simply is, all things considered, ideal entertainment background for any plug important enough in itself to justify a radio show. In this connection it may be worth while to notice that probably not more than fifty or sixty in every hundred radio listeners have any idea whose program is reaching them and that more than half the programs are instantly forgotten.

Most radio producers don't worry too much about their commercials, because they have the same charming faith in "radio," as such, that their fathers used to have in "advertising," as such, in the good old Bok Prize days.

7

SHOW WINDOWS— BEAUTIFUL, BUT DUMB

SUCCESSFUL windows! They, too, must observe the showman's formula of pleasing the audience. How? by suggesting vividly the ways in which the audience can *benefit* from the use of the merchandise displayed. Walk up Main Street—you find in many store windows too much emphasis on the merchandise and not half enough emphasis on the use of it. Half the stores in your town use Chorus Girlish Windows! Beautiful, but Dumb.

A Fifth Avenue furniture store fills a huge window with beautiful merchandise, but fails to add human interest. No landscape artist will paint even a deserted forest without sketching in his bird or fox. That prevents it from being a collection of trees! So with a collection of furniture. Until it's hooked up with a human touch, it's so many pieces of merchandise. Any room in window display should give one of two impressions: (*a*) Somebody just left it, or (*b*) somebody's just going in. The furniture window we are thinking about does neither. How much more interesting that room could be if some retail

Belasco would simply add an ash tray with a half-burned cigarette—and a magazine open, face down, on the bed.

How easy, too, it would be for somebody to add a panel giving a thumbnail description of the people who own the room, telling briefly where they are and what they are doing. Or to have placed, framed, in one corner a fairly large photograph of this room—this furniture (this window, of course) with people sitting in chairs and using the tables. Here is tangible merchandise with no other showmanship appeal more vital than the beauty of its own design. Up the street, Cunard takes something far *less* tangible and puts a definite sales thought in it. How? They use an effective photo of a dress parade of the officers on a Cunard ship. But they make it interesting by using an odd lens perspective; a sort of Roxy Ballet formation. Then a few coils of deck hemp rope as a scenic picture frame. You have:

1. Man Power, or Life, selling Safety and Spirit
2. Interesting arrangement through good symmetric design
3. An air of Rugged sea-atmosphere.

Yet right next door another company just continues to stuff a window full of ordinary goods. That window catches passers-by in the ratio of 1 out of 3 that stop for the Cunard window.

An airlines window on 42nd Street packs the crowds out front with displays of flying instruments realistically laid out as in the plane. Next door it,

too, has a dull neighbor—a cutlery store, with thousands of items to sell, but unable to find even one with a story good enough to get half the nearby crowd.

When Jack Dempsey put his wine cellar in his window he created a feature that is still packing the crowds on the sidewalks. Right around the corner another restaurant has still a window full of rubber plants—1932 vintage.

Why is this retail point of view so different from the manufacturers' point of view? Why do the store men use so much less ingenuity and sales-sense than the cardboard cutout display tribe? For one thing, the store *owns* the window and therefore doesn't appreciate it. The manufacturer only gets it for a few weeks—and knows he has to get the most out of it in that time. Therefore he uses every trick in the bag. Cost, of course, has much to do with it. You can't put the artwork color printing, or even the thought, into a small town department-store window that Colgate puts into ten thousand window displays. But if you can't think up ideas you certainly can steal them. And where you can't afford expensive effects you can borrow a lot of scenery if you try. And you can almost achieve results with homemade effects that can compete with the best Bradshaw Crandall lithos. At a Boy Scout handicraft exhibit, for example, a new troop faced a problem of having nothing to show. No knot boards, no hand-rigged wooden bridges, no nothing. The smart scoutmaster, not wanting to be noted as the worst troop in the district,

fixed up an exhibit of nice new shiny camping equipment borrowed from a local store. He dressed this up with about 50 copies of *Boy's Life*, resplendent with their Montgomery Flagg covers in color. Of 20 troops, he was voted third place, and his exhibit was thought by many to be Headquarters for the show.

Itinerant Windows

A happy compromise is thus being reached with the increasing use of the itinerant display. As the young lady said to the young man, "I won't kiss *you* but I'll sit still while you kiss me." So stores that won't do a window job themselves are at least permitting manufacturers to do the job for them—or to them. These itinerant windows have been very successful, notwithstanding, and have greatly improved the level of department-store windows.

One company making itinerant window displays is so sure of its knowledge of human nature and, so, of the audience-value of the show windows it builds, that it offers to furnish retailers with manufacturers' displays for nothing—billing each window thereafter on a per-person charge for audience actually delivered. Vaudeville booking offices might, perhaps, adapt this idea for a tour on a percentage basis.

But to get back to these retail windows. When itinerant displays are not available, what are you going to do? Answer: Check over your list of showmanship elements and use them. Trade papers are a good source for display ideas. The *Jewelers Circular* retained a display expert (no less than Polly

Pettit of the New York School of Display) to develop a whole bookful of good display ideas. The book is prefaced with some general instructions for displays, includes 55 photos with analytic descriptions. Lots of the scenery is borrowed. Just a few of the borrowed things include: oil paintings of landscapes, animals and people, travel posters, flowers and plants, magazines, reprints of ads, photos of local personalities, real food, maps, model airplanes, rare tapestries, lamps and other furniture, dolls, fabrics, wearing apparel, accessories, books, masks, toys, manufacturing machinery.

Just see how the various elements of showmanship have been applied to windows.

Timeliness: When beer came back a department store celebrated by putting in its window a beer barrel to promote a new shade of hosiery called Malt.

Actuality: A clothing store puts realism into a wash suit promotion with an actual washing machine in the window. A cardboard cutout of a colored washerwoman adds personification.

Mystery: Peepshows had nothing on the Prophylactic toothbrush counter display that included a stereopticon-type device through which a customer could see 3-dimension photos of brush bristles.

Considerable showmanship has been exhibited by the Einson-Freeman Company whose Vice-President, Frank Gonda, prophetically wrote in *Printers' Ink* as far back as 1932—"More showmanship in the show window should be the keynote of far more advertising effort in this direction. . . . After all, the win-

dow is the advertiser's stage or screen on which he must tell his story—through which he must get the attention and hold the interest of his audience, the buying public. The greater the degree of indifference of that public, the harder, more intelligent must be his effort to interest them—to jolt them out of their apathy and bring them to an interested standstill in front of his particular show."

The Electrolux Refrigerator has been widely promoted through demonstrations which have a mystery theme. The refrigerator is placed in the window and the public is invited to guess how much gas the refrigerator will consume in a thirty-day period. The public almost always guesses high. This promotion has the objective value of focusing attention of the buyer on the low cost of operation of the product. Wherever this promotion has been used, it has been entirely successful. It is usually promoted by means of a contest, the refrigerator either being placed in a theater lobby or in the dealer's window.

Regal presents one of the really good pieces of window showmanship. You remember the two shoes —one a handmade original import from a swanky London bootmaker with original price check. The other a Regal copy at $5. You are asked to guess which is which.

Motion: Only in museums do we still find tableaux. Modern dramatics demand action. Modern display gives it. As recently as 1931 I (zk) was able to get paid in cash for saying in *Printers' Ink Monthly,* "Watch out for motion in window display." The story

originally titled "Possibilities of Motion" was retitled "Possibilities and Pitfalls." But in 1935 the National Carbon Company eliminated most of the pitfalls by inventing a foolproof, inexpensive motion unit. It runs on a single pair of dry cells until you get bored playing with it. Unit 50c; cells 50c; cost $1 for 500 hours of display—5 hours for a cent! Invented by chance for use in an Eveready display. Now that motion is available at low cost, here's how some showmanship advertisers are using it. The Kool package with the serene Penguin aboard rises and falls on the waves. Santa's arm, holding the Eveready Flashlight waves back and forth. A Red Ball of warning swings across the "Don't be Fooled" panel of a General Electric display. The famous Dutch Boy goes to work, painting. Mother and daughter spend their days and nights rocking back and forth, for the Armstrong Rug Company. Life-Savers: A girl looks at you through a huge Life Saver in her hands. She turns it.

Motion interests people. The suggestion of motion is better than no motion at all. Jumbled displays sell more than do neat unbroken piles of cans. Cutlery knives sold better when placed three inches deep in a cake. Here, too, was a suggestion of motion.

Other users of motion display get a variety of unusual effects. Scribner's, to stimulate interest in an exhibit of the making of books, put a linotype machine (operator and all) in the display window. It crowded the store. A mailing list was built up from the names of the visitors. Dr. Scholl's Foot Remedies

shows a cross section of leg from knee down. A hammer strikes vertically on the knee to dramatize the wear on the human leg.

These are just a few of the effects you can get with a comparatively simple use of motion. Again, the surface hasn't been scratched.

Windows that really interest people will pull a truly incredible amount of interest—and sales. One hot summer evening a dry goods store took all the merchandise out of one window and held a Bathing Beauty show with five live models in the window. Two thousand people crushed against the window front. The show cost exactly $20. More than 100 suits were sold. It was easy to trace direct results, the manager reports, because customers would come in and say, "I want to see that black and white suit the blond model wore."

The Hamilton Watch Company, with characteristic artistic enterprise, routed to 500 jewelers a sundial timepiece of the year 1650. Its sales pull was $40,000. The manufacturers of Rat-tox, a new vermicide, gave dealers a window display including two live white rats. The sales were multiplied nearly five times during the week of the display. A dealer energetic enough to rig up a window mechanism that would smash an indestructible spark plug up and down against a piece of rock had even better results. The window increased his sales 1,000 per cent.

Scott's Emulsion gives us a window that hits on all twelve. First it takes its theme from the circus. The scene is set in a lion's cage (danger and conflict)

realistically suggested by vertical rows of black spiraled crepe paper to represent iron bars. Add one lion and one tiger and one Clyde Beatty saying something nice about his sponsor. The "Step Inside the Tent" urge is there too, on cards saying "Check your weight. Free Chart inside."

Interior Display

Commenting on the field for interior display in department stores, Harry Alexander told the St. Louis Sales Managers Club:

"Here is a thought, somebody said it was my original thought, that is, a department store is a woman's theater. Did you ever think of it that way? She is there almost all day; she may not buy anything; she will go to the most exclusive store and come back with a spool of thread, but it is her theater; she looks around, she thinks, when she shops. If I were at the head of a big department store, I would engage Roxy as the impresario of the store, no matter if he wanted $100,000 a year. You would see the millions flow in. R. H. Macy does about $80,000,000 a year. A big theatrical man running a department store as the impresario with showmanship displays —you couldn't keep the women out!"

Interior display is just beginning to get the recognition it deserves. In department stores, particularly, the use of good interior display—in counters, on counters, in aisles, on walls—is just catching on.

The value of interior display is tremendous. In a grocery store where only 67 bottles of an undisplayed product were sold in three weeks, as soon as displayed it jumped to 154. A famous brand of soup jumped from 1,068 to 1,824 when displayed.

There is no reason why interior display must follow always the conventionalized or orthodox lines of counter cartoons, cardboard cutouts, corrugated floor stands and open display. Chevrolet provided 65,000 dealers with a special display for spark plugs. Two old plugs hung from wires in a birdcage, captioned, "These birds steal your gas."

U. S. Lines, as we have already noted, did an outstanding job of interior display in converting an entire building into a ship. They started in the window with a scene on a pier. The pier was in the foreground and behind it was the bow of the ship. The illusion was continued by the use of a gangplank as the store entrance. The ground floor was redecorated to exhibit portions of actual staterooms and the second floor was converted into a lifelike sun deck. Here was a property man on a spree. Deck chairs, an awning-type roof, photo murals of the New York sky line, the ship's rail—and forward, a replica of the navigating bridge, complete with the actual instruments. The display jammed the store as no other promotion ever has.

Whether it's the complete conversion of a floor or just an interesting bit of counter display, interior display can be made to do a lot of good jobs if given a chance.

Go *through* the Looking Glass! Don't let your window be a static thing. Make it functional with respect to your merchandising and publicity plans. For example: The Masland Carpet Company stepped right through dealers' windows and out onto the

sidewalks. A rug was placed on the sidewalk for 30 days. Posters in the windows tell how this exposure is equal to x-teen years of ordinary wear. The story is retold in newspapers, store posters, radio, direct mail, news publicity. At the 30th day, the rug is placed in the window of the store—half of it washed to show how beautiful it may still be.

Before the International Association of Display Men at Chicago, Illinois, in June, 1937, appropriately enough, Zenn Kaufman said,

"I'd like to read to you a little bit from an early quotation on showmanship, and curiously enough this quotation is from a talk given by your own secretary, Sylvan Rieser, twelve years ago in Atlantic City. He has set forth better than I can express it the importance of making this showmanship practical,—not very, very clever, but practical. Let me read it to you.

"Of recent months a neglected word has gained currency in the literature of the day. I refer to the word 'showmanship.' Showmanship is the art of dramatizing events and situations so as to make people pause, look and applaud; from the theatrical standpoint, it is an art that packs them in. It is a characteristic of the conception of a play which wears callouses on the fingers of the box office man busily changing five dollar bills.

"We need showmanship in our work. It is the vital spark that gives dollar value to a display. Having established the objective of a display, having selected the necessary details and having arranged them, the giants of window display add a dash of showmanship to the mixture and lo, the box office gets the response.

"There is a subtle something that dramatizes and vitalizes display and prompts people to applaud by buying, and after all that is the only applause we want.

"Showmanship makes people say not 'What a clever window!' but 'Let us buy that merchandise.'

"In conclusion, let me remind you that the purpose of all window display, the whole reason for our commercial existence is to sell. Any other result may be a pleasant avocation, it might be an act of charity, it may be a hobby or fad or what-not. These results are all right if you and your firm can afford them, but good showmanship produces displays that sell and the dimes and dollars play 'Home, Sweet Home' in the cash drawer."

8

PUBLICITY: THE SHOWMAN'S PLAYGROUND

So long as a burlesque "strip" dancer can, by taking off any clothes, earn ten times the money and a hundred times the renown the most beautiful professional clothes model can earn by adequately wearing the most expensive gowns, we can hardly expect more intelligent interest in the more complicated sorts of exhibitionistic effort. Nevertheless, much bewilderment surrounds the job of "getting" publicity, because much of it is obviously accidental. Or at least partly accidental. "Publicity" results quite naturally from most good showmanship, because showmanship attempts primarily to interest the public; and bona fide publicity is merely a practical professional admission by the editor and the reporter that the attempt to win public notice has, in their judgment, been successful enough to be put into print. On the other hand, many a carefully designed attempt to be interesting on a large scale fails dismally while quite unconscious attractiveness will by its very naturalness attract an unexpected interest.

Even so, the most profitable attitude may be that of a novice salesman, who upon meeting a buyer claiming to give all his business to friends, promptly and guilelessly asked, "How can I become a friend?" While many "breaks" in publicity may still seem to be largely luck, this book can perhaps tell you at least how to move toward improving your luck.

Put on your propositions in terms of a show. Into any situation in which you are interested inject conflict, sex or personality. Publicity is yours for the asking. Or you can get publicity by interpreting almost any situation in a showman's way. When the Marshall Field Merchandise Express ran down the Mississippi Valley, a thousand opportunities were there for publicity. A battery of telephones was installed on the train as it reached each town. Right in that battery of telephones, as a single example, began a chain of reinforcing material for secondary publicity in telephone trade papers and others interested in telephones.

For the publicity knack is really a two-part proposition: a publicity man has to do

1. things that in themselves are publicity
2. things that other people will use for *their* publicity and thereby increase his own.

The Shirley Temple letter to Santa Claus had both. In common with many other newspapers, the St. Louis *Globe-Democrat* reproduced Shirley Temple's letter to Santa Claus on its picture page. She wrote in part:

I would like a midget automobile that runs and if they don't make them at the north pole I know where you can buy one.

The advertising manager of Sears Roebuck & Co. knew also, for he lifted cut and caption bodily from Thursday's paper and reproduced it again Friday, with this friendly comment:

We know too, Shirley.

One of the most amazing achievements in publicity is the Chevrolet Soapbox Derby. Here was a promotion that was waiting for years to be born. And then it grew up like Jack and the Beanstalk. Why? Because it had so many showmanship elements. There are conflict, suspense, motion, life, danger. When the contest outgrew its home town, it became competition and tapped *pride*. It once happened that the son of a Sinclair dealer in Atlanta won the local Chevvie Soapbox Derby. Result: a photo of the boy with plug for the Derby in Sinclair house organ, circulation 1,000,000.

Conversation, as well as newsprint, goes to the highest bidder—that is, the one who bids the highest factor of human interest. If you have something that really has in it the emotional elements of public interest you will have no trouble getting publicity. The public wants it. The newspapers cry for it. News and heart-throbs make the newspapers go around, "People will buy any paper which seems to express their feelings in addition to printing the facts," said William Randolph Hearst.

Publicity isn't hard to get. The Yonkers Ferry gets it with a midsummer report of ice in the Palisades. That's humor. Corning Glass Works gets columns of space with news of a glass frying pan. Country Club Estates, a real estate development, gets it by naming a street after Helen Merchant, the girl it features on its radio programs. The D.M.A.A. got it by giving the U. S. post office a free booth at its exposition. Grossingers, at Liberty (N. Y.), the hotel where Barney Ross trained for the McLarnin fight, got it simply by cajoling itself into a new post office. Press dispatches thereafter were dated at Grossinger, N. Y. When a certain laundry finds a piece of jewelry in a bundle of wash it makes sure that the story gets out to the newspapers. The Refrigeration Show gets publicity with pictures when it puts a *live* model in a refrigerator. The Carnation Milk Company gets it when it makes a seven-foot birthday cake in honor of the Quints, reared on its product. Marcella Burns Hahner gets publicity for her department store by inviting writers to lecture in her book department. A bank in Battle Creek gets it by opening a "Battle Creek" room—a collection of documents concerning the history of the city. A. & P. gets it by hiring George Rector to supervise testing kitchens and having him do personal appearances at department stores and food shows.

New Yorker Hotel got it by inviting camera fans to try a candid camera spree. Dodge got it by sending camels into crowded business districts carrying banners reading "I thought I had the record but

Dodge owners report 18 to 24 miles per gallon." The Smithsonian Institute got it with a United Press release saying that Christmas did not fall on December 25th. Doug Leigh got it by releasing a story on the 90,000 electric bulbs on Broadway, also by circulating a rumor that the fence built in the middle of Times Square to stop jaywalkers from crossing the street was really to stop them from getting run over as they looked at his Wilson Whiskey sign. In Brooklyn, Sears got it by announcing that Santa Claus was coming to the store and children could call him on the telephone. In Ogden, Utah, W. H. Wright customarily celebrated straw hat day by sending drinking straws to all his friends; when an unknown friend sent back a whole *bale* of straw Wright crashed the papers. The New York Stock Exchange gained a friendly good-will story by arranging with the Madison Square Boys' Club to stage a pocket census. The boys descended on the Exchange, made the members empty their pockets revealing a wide and amusing variety of contents.

Homer Teamer put his Pennsylvania Insurance Federation on the front page of the Pittsburgh papers with a costume parade of old fire fighters.

Sam Zuckerman developed "Blessed Eventer," a radio program on a baby theme, which pulled over 13,000 inquiries for Menzies Dairies, Inc. in the little town of McKeesport, Pennsylvania. Over 85% of all the babies born in Allegheny County "responded" to the invitation to participate in the program over a period of 18 months time.

Many bakers get front page space by tieing in with dynamic pie maker Boston Strauss. Strauss gets the bakers on the front page with his showmanlike manner for making pies.

Minnette Crouch—herself an attractive bit of showmanship—who represents General Mills at bakers' conventions, rated considerable newspaper space in Chicago last year when she was photographed, in bakers' costume, in the act of sawing in half a thirty day old loaf of fresh frozen bread.

Lane Bryant gets publicity with a "Recreation Roundup," a fancy name for a sports fashion show. Sinclair gets it through keeping alive old traditions through its own radio minstrel show. Thousands of amateur minstrel shows have been based on scripts furnished by Sinclair.

Even misfortune can be salvaged for fortunate publicity. Truly Warner offered hats free to the ten men who could guess the winner, round, and the minute, in the Louis-Baer fight. Unfortunately, over a thousand men were tied for first place. Trouble? Not so bad. Happening into Douglas Warner's office the morning after the fight, we suggested the possibility of a news story. The result was this publicity item free in newspapers from coast to coast:

JOE LOUIS TRIUMPH GOES TO 1,238 HEADS

Some fighters have been accused of not being able to knock your hat off, but this can't be said of Joe Louis.

When the Brown Bomber clouted Max Baer into fistic oblivion he knocked hats on to 1,238 people simultaneously.

How come? Well, it was this way. Truly Warner offered a

hat to the person guessing nearest to the round and time that the Louis-Baer fight would terminate; 1,238 guessed right.

That was one misfortune. Here's another: James R. Bailey owned an inn in Connecticut. He had an eye for publicity. One fine afternoon a circus parade broke loose and tore through the plate-glass window of his inn. The forty-horse train may have done real damage. At any rate, far from being dismayed, Bailey promptly renamed his inn "The Forty Horse Inn" and prospered ever after.

Let the Other Fellow Help You

A lot of drabbish business concerns could well imitate the "press book" technique of the movie people. You've seen these gorgeous exploitation books the films promotion man sends out with each new motion picture. They contain:

(a) advertising copy for theaters
(b) radio scripts, newspaper stories, ideas of contests
(c) ways to tie in *other* advertisers—and tie in with other advertisers.

All advertisers do (a) and (b) in a more or less conventional manner. Part (*c*) is where many of us could do some profitable borrowing. Clay Morgan did it with his *Normandie*. The *Normandie* was news only because Morgan made it news.[1] *Advertising Age* reminds us that:

[1] Other advertisers were quick to tie in with it. Carrier Engineering Corp. featured its job on the *Normandie* in full-page magazine copy. Socony-Vacuum advertised that Mobiloils were used on the *Normandie*. Silk houses featured their fabrics as used on the *Normandie*.

A new criterion was set when the New York Daily News dedicated a recent lead editorial and feature cartoon to facetious applause of the exploits of Clayland Morgan of the French Line in arranging a warm editorial reception for the *Normandie's* arrival.

"Our hats are off," said the editorial, "to Mr. Clay Morgan, press agent for the French Line." The editorial said that New York editors seem more susceptible to the wiles of the crafty press agent than editors of "hick town" papers.

So many people featured the *Normandie* that it gained enough reputation to "carry" all the people who took their own "free rides" on its publicity. Again you have a "Which came first?" situation. Did all these tie-ups make the *Normandie*? Or vice versa? The Piccadilly Hotel urged visitors coming to town to see the *Normandie*, to use its facilities, including an information service on the *Normandie*. London Terrace claiming to be the world's largest apartment house, welcomed the "largest ship in the world" with a 300-line advertisement with a picture of the *Normandie* as it looked from London Terrace roof. A model of the *Normandie* was placed in the street window of the Empire State Building. An adjoining placard invited stoppers to see the ship complete her maiden voyage. (Step right inside and take the elevator to the Empire State Tower!) Schumaker, a fabric house, devoted three full windows of their 40th Street store to the display of the fabrics they supplied for the ship. The Empire Gold Buying Company broadcast that the principal cargo of the *Normandie* was 25 million dollars in gold brought to New York to take advantage of the same high prices that the Empire was offering for old jewelry. The

Daily News Record of May 22, 1935, carried an item "By Wireless to Fairchild News Service." It read:

> R. H. Macy & Co. is capitalizing on the publicity incident to the maiden voyage of the new French Liner *Normandie* with a truck carrying cases of merchandise driving up and down the Champs Elysées and bearing a sign reading, "Some of the 200 cases to leave on the maiden trip of the *Normandie* for Macy's, New York." About 100 of these cases are understood to contain champagne, and others, gloves and laces. Photographs of the truck are to be enlarged and displayed with the merchandise on its arrival in New York.

Department stores selling Simmons Mattresses, Grunow Refrigerators, advertised that the new ship used these products. And the Bureau of Advertising of the Newspaper Publishers' Association gathered all these together in a booklet for advertisers, telling of all the tie-ups and reminding us how the newspapers provide a timely vehicle for such promotions. The French Line, finding its publicity for the *Normandie* reaching a climax too quickly, cooked up a story of a strike that might delay the sailing.

This form of advantageous tie-in with other advertisers, is illustrated again in the case of a Procter & Gamble contest for soap carving. Department stores recognized the interest in this hobby. They were glad to show the winning pieces when they are routed around the country. Thus the stores share the glory with P. & G. When George Graf originated Sandwich Week all manner of people gave him tie-ins. Hardware stores, for example, advertised toasters. One of the pickle companies arranged displays in

grocers' windows featuring all sorts of food products that might relate to sandwiches.

When the Lincoln Oil Company, under the sales influence of the ingenious General Outdoor Advertising Co., built a safety beacon atop the Merchants' Bank Building in Indianapolis, a basic "safety" advertising theme was created which was to gain for Lincoln Oil many thousands of dollars in free publicity. The safety theme was expanded into 24-sheet posters. Then the flood of publicity started—by itself.

No sooner was the poster paper dry on the boards than the company began to receive favorable comment on it. Not just the random letters of folks in the street. Correspondence began to come in on the letterheads of Boards of Education, Police Departments, Safety Councils and other public bodies. All letters voiced approbation of the campaign. Some of them asked for copies of the poster for use in educational work. One letter pointed out that the posters were useful because they dramatized the very points about safety that all the civic organizations were attempting to sell. This incidental mail immediately suggested to Lincoln Oil Company the wide opportunity for constructive publicity if the contact with these public groups and officials could be organized on a systematic basis.

So that was the next step. The company took its safety story as then developed directly to the heads of civic groups. It visited Chiefs of Police, Public Safety Commissioners, Boards of Education, Rotary

Clubs, and all organizations whose function included any kind of public welfare. In the states of Indiana and Ohio, the posterettes soon were a familiar sight in schools, libraries, factories, garages, churches and all manner of public places. Lecturers on public safety used the Lincoln Oil advertising copy to illustrate their talks. The posters were standard equipment in most of the educational work that was done anywhere in the interest of public safety. No amount of cash could pay for some of the real advertising that Lincoln has received. And most of this publicity was obtained without expense. In many towns the police arranged for the distribution of the posterettes, even insisted that they be displayed.

Another example of how an individual publicity job can be developed into a big national constructive movement was the arranging by Harry Bruno's organization of a First National Air Transport Day, held at Newark Airport, May 15, 1935. In just a single day more than 50,000 persons attended. Originally this idea was generated by the plan to christen a new amphibian plan for the Standard Oil Company of New Jersey, the client. Obviously, this would have been only a one-day story of two paragraphs or so. Checking back, as we have advised, on air transport, Bruno discovered that May 15th marked the seventeenth anniversary of the first regular airmail flight in this country. Branching out from this startling bit of research work, the event, originally only a plane christening, developed into a national birthday celebration, with governors of all states

sending in their messages to Newark, with every big transport line placing its ships on exhibition and furnishing free plane rides over the Greater City; with a score or more aviation companies putting on an interesting and instructive exhibit in Newark's new $500,000 Administration Building which was dedicated officially as part of the day's events. For several weeks the newspapers were filled with information on the event, the leading merchants, businessmen and others took part in the festivities, and so the christening of the new Standard Oil airplane received, through the smart development of a single simple fact, infinitely more space than the event itself deserved.

But before going any further with this "reciprocity" tie-up-with-tie-in idea, let's turn back for a moment to the fellows who invented it—the movie men. Let's see what they've done.

Movie tie-ups, while based fundamentally on the regular reciprocal exchange of publicity, owe their chief value as a never-failing drawing card to the use of a well-known and fairly picturesque personality. In a movie tie-up you get two things: first, a theme (that is, a copy tie-up with the star); second, if you are smart enough, you get a reciprocal deal in actual advertising in the form of free promotion on the theater screen, the lobby, the program or various other favors which the theater can provide.[2] Don't

[2] Let us, however, caution you against rushing too quickly into a reciprocal tie-up. Don't give without getting. A great many tie-ups are 90-Movie and 10-Merchant. Merchants seem to be hynotized by any offer to shine in the reflected glory of Greta Garbo. (Two passes for the show throw a lot of people off balance.) It doesn't pay. The picture men have been spoiled.

forget there are always two things in any reciprocal tie-up:

first, the *name;*
second, the space.

Let's consider the name. What value has it? Lots. First it has the attention value. People are always interested in stars. Second, it carries *authority,* the precious by-product of personality. When Lux advertises that Hollywood stars use Lux, millions of women listen and are impressed. A particularly good example of a good name *tie-up,* well merchandised, is this one that Max Spivak arranged for Wahneta Silk Company.

Miss Helen Hayes was appearing in a play called *Petticoat Influence* at a time when taffetas were not in vogue. So far as we know, taffetas have nothing to do with petticoats, but that did not bother Max Spivak. He prevailed on Miss Hayes on behalf of Wahneta Silk Company to wear a taffeta dress in the play. He prevailed on her to talk taffeta in a discussion of "Style in Clothes" in a nation-wide broadcast. And thus he could prevail on Bonwit Teller's, New York, and 30 other stores to help put taffeta back in vogue. An unexpected $50,000 to Wahneta from this.

A first cousin to this sort of movie tie-up is a book tie-up.

Joseph Hergesheimer wrote a novel a few years ago which Max Spivak read. It was called *The Party Dress.* There was something about the particular

dress Hergesheimer wrote about that "did things" to a particular lady in the story. Spivak told Meyer Bosnick, dress manufacturer, about it. Soon Gimbel's, New York, and 40 stores in other cities were showing Hergesheimer's *Party Dress* and Bosnick's "party dress" in their windows and in their book and dress departments, with cross references to both. Bosnick got $40,000 worth of business from the tie-up.

Empire Gold Buying Company tied in with *Treasure Island,* holding auditions for boys to play the part of Jackie Cooper in a radio version of the picture. The tie-up leaned on the interest in Jackie Cooper and stressed the treasure buried in every home. Jackie Cooper's parrot (from the picture) was given away as a prize in a contest.[3]

So much for the *personality* values. The second thing, of course, is the *reciprocity* matter. After all, you are doing something for the movie people. What are they going to do for you? They'll tell you they've done enough when they give you a star's picture, or, perhaps, even a picture posed with your product. Sometimes they are right. But usually you are entitled to something more. Or, to put it another way,

[3] Empire strongly suspects this parrot was bought surreptitiously in a local pet shop. At any rate, that parrot did a personal tour of New York theater lobbies and 10 doubles *were* bought in pet shops to cover the great number of theaters using the tie-up. Displays were placed in 67 theaters. A million handbills were distributed in lobbies. Original theater lobby displays were installed at Empire. A tie-in was arranged with R. H. Macy where *Treasure Island* books were being sold. Empire definitely traced sales to a free display in Macy's window.

usually you won't get your money's worth unless you get more. And if you work it right you *will* get more.

A good example of a practical reciprocity deal was the Majestic tie-up with *One Night of Love*, a Columbia picture. Majestic Radios were placed in theater lobbies with appropriate credit lines. The radio dealers naturally featured the picture. One of the benefits of this tie-up was that it provoked dealers to do some advertising at their own expense, always a desirable feature from a manufacturer's point of view. This tie-up sold thousands of radios in a few weeks' time.

It is incredible what coverage you can really get with a well-planned motion-picture tie-up. Mel-o-Rol staged a tie-up with the Eddie Cantor picture *Kid Millions*. It happened that the picture was laid in an ice cream factory so the tie-up was easy to arrange. Borden distributed through the motion-picture theaters 300,000 coupons each good for a Mel-o-Rol. The theater operator gave these coupons away as a premium to any kid coming to the picture. (And, of course, used a screen trailer before the picture to advertise this fact for Mel-o-Rol.) Ninety per cent of the coupons were redeemed; 168 theaters used the tie-up in one Metropolitan area, showing the trailer 1,500 times to more than 800,000 people; 107 theaters used stage announcements 305 times, and 138 screen trailers were run at the picture houses' own expense. Two million people flowed through 220 lobbies in which Mel-o-Rol displays were placed. Publicity ran in 146 regional newspapers reaching

1,700,000 people. Moving-picture theaters arranged 170 window displays. Mel-o-Rol salesmen had no trouble getting dealers to post window strips so that the kids would know where to redeem the coupons.

Those readers getting out pencils to figure the cost of duplicating this Eddie Cantor tie-up had best stop to remember it was a "natural"—boys and free ice cream.

Another publicity idea that clicked emotionally was one used for promoting *Lady for a Day*. This tie-up dramatized Apple Mary, a real flesh-and-blood character who was known in the picture as Apple Annie. She was literally made a "lady for a day." A Fifth Avenue couturier dressed her, and she was put up for a day at the Waldorf. An automobile concern provided her with a liveried chauffeur and a car. In other words, for twenty-four hours, this elderly woman apple peddler became a modern commercial Cinderella. She lived as a woman of tremendous wealth would live. Because the story was packed with human interest, all the companies entering into that tie-up received important publicity in the papers.

Columbia Pictures had another successful tie-up with the J. C. Penney Company along this fashion. Columbia has a cartoon series titled "Scrappy." The character is a lovable kid of about ten. Penney, on the other hand, regularly conducts a "Back-to-School-Days" campaign during August of each year, at which time a special sales drive is made on school supplies and clothing for school children.

The result of their combined publicity drive was a "Scrappy-Back-to-School-Days-Sale." J. C. Penney designed window displays in which the character of Scrappy, in every conceivable pose, was used as the decorative motif. At the top of the windows, valances were hung in which Scrappy could be observed admiring a new pair of shoes, looking through a blank-book, holding a pencil, etc. The price tags affixed to the various articles contained the picture of Scrappy. Each of these tags was the replica of one of the old red-felt-bound slates and, in addition to the likeness of Scrappy, there was a line or two of copy in which the character expressed his opinion of the merchandise.

The local motion-picture theater entered because Columbia made it possible for the manager of each local Penney Store to obtain the use of the theater for a Saturday Morning Matinee, at which a couple of Scrappy cartoons and other comedies were shown to the children. Parents were not admitted to these shows unless escorted by their children. The idea was to make the children feel that they were taking their parents to the show, instead of the reverse being true. To get into the theater, the children had to assemble in front of the J. C. Penney Store, arrangements had been previously made for a Boy Scout band or some other juvenile band to head the parade. They had explanatory banners generously provided by J. C. Penney. The parade started in front of the store, the children marched half a mile or so before entering the theater and, once inside, each child

received an ice cream cone or a bag of candy. After the show, they were paraded back to the store. This procedure marked the beginning of the sale in every Penney community. The result, according to the J. C. Penney home office executives, was a business 40 per cent greater than any previous campaign conducted for that purpose.

Publicity always comes through something else. If that something doesn't come, you have to go and get it. Truly Warner had it fall in his lap. Shirley had to get it. Yonkers Ferry had it fall in their lap. Wilson got publicity by hiring Rector. French Line had publicity fall in its lap. But—there's more merit and just as much technique in getting publicity when you rightfully *deserve* it as there is in going out in the first place and deserving publicity!

9

OF TRYLONS AND PERISPHERES

WORLD'S FAIRS are crowning examples of practical showmanship on a professional spree. Figure it out for yourself. Millions of people paying untold millions of dollars to see ——

To see what—exactly?

The Century of Progress was, in a day of dull depression, the world's greatest show. The New York World's Fair, no doubt, will turn out a greater show. But since we know now the box office, let's use the Chicago Fair for example.

What did people expect when they headed to Chicago back in 1934?

Answer for us that one question: "What will people come to New York to see?"

A World's Fair is, of course, the greatest show on earth. At least so presumed by those who go. They picture 48 state fairs: all rolled up into one for variety; and multiplied by 48 for size! They get it. Here is the ne plusest of all ultras in entertainment. Imagine: Vaudeville! Magic! Racing! Strip Dancing! Lectures! Museums! Movies! Animals! Music! What could be more inviting?

Yet there's a sharp object lesson. Showmanship, in the aggregate, pulls huge crowds. At a splendid profit. Yet many of the advertisers bank-rolling the enterprise don't stop to realize that while a World's Fair, unlike a chain, can be infinitely stronger than its weakest links, no individual exhibit should, nevertheless, fail to give the public a full quota of showmanship.

Escape! Romance! Thrills! Laughs! A chance to play! A change in scenery. Something novel. These, as we have seen, are always sure keys to human interests. Yet few exhibitors play their show cards right. Surprisingly few, in fact, except those whose shows by their very nature compelled natural showmanship. Those few exhibitors who did, accidentally or intentionally, devise for their visitors an emotional merry-go-round ride were those that pulled the paying crowds.

Since Fairs are shows in themselves, our text again need not dwell so much on the need of *applying* the essential elements of showmanship as to the need of *recognizing* those essentials. So let's take this Fair spot as a sort of seventh-inning stretch. Give ourselves a chance to look around. Stop here and, perhaps, review how closely the rules for success indicated in our first eight chapters actually paralled the notable successes in the test of reality.

Again, too, the reminder, possibly unnecessary by now, that the same elements that packed audiences at Chicago will sell goods in any town in the United States.[1]

[1] The chief value of the World's Fair as a test of showmanship was

More important, however, the warning that things that failed at the Fair will equally destroy any selling plan. In any medium. In any city. For example: at the Food exhibit, there were four mayonnaise exhibits. Three were static, one in motion. For every 50 people that stopped at the single exhibit using motion, one of the "*statics*" pulled one visitor.

Take the more ambitious 1933 Standard Brands show. Artistic. Yet it lacked the showmanship necessary to tell the story of the Standard Brands fresh-delivered system. It relied on symbolic panorama. A good idea. But symbols are not for the masses. Half the visitors to the Fair entered the Food Building. But only about 7 per cent of them bothered themselves a single moment with Standard Brands symbolism. And even they were possibly more interested in the artistic elements of the symbolism than in the products being offered. Even attractive attendants could have boosted interest. But the second year this was all changed.

Over in the Transportation Building, too, one railroad lost the crowds with an economic diorama showing the lands it served. Dry as the prairie dust. A few feet away, another railroad pulled them in. How? First with *sound*. The locomotive bell was clanged, Coney Island fashion, to announce a show. Then two old-time characters came, circus side-show fashion, and played an accordion. They retired to a

kill-off competition. No exhibit there could drift with the tide of traffic. Overflows were impossible. There were so many *good* things to see that the poor shows were automatically eliminated. Pretentiousness couldn't get a break, even by buying its space "next to looking matter."

cutaway section of an old-fashioned train, there they did a short vaudeville "sketch" complaining bitterly about the handicaps of old railroad service. A quick-change act shifted these characters before a background of a new and modern train. In modern dress they marveled conversationally at the wonder of the modern train. Quite naturally, the crowds ate it up.

Leave the failures. Turn to the successes. Again you have demonstration of unfailing sales force unleashed when the right elements are used. Here in vast crowds, pulsating with action, was proved in real life, again and again, the old *American Weekly* formula of "Make them laugh, cry, thrill them, talk of love." Or, more simply, just *please* them.[2]

The crowning proof of the validity of actual rules for profitable use of showmanship was the change in the nature of exhibits between the first and the second year. Proof, perhaps, of our showmanship principles. More entertainment was added the second year. By 1934, there were 15 regular theaters, fully enclosed. There were 7 theaters open on the sides. There were 9 stage shows. There were 5 outdoor stage entertainments. *All* were commercially sponsored.

And that was just a start. The other exhibitors

[2] Revelation toothpowder, with a small booth, scored a simple hit by giving away samples. Kids were eliminated. The sample line was deliberately slowed down so that approaching samplers had plenty of *time* to read a sign advertising Revelation. At a record low cost, 1,600,000 samples were given away, and you had to sign your name in a book, mention your present tooth cleanser (thus being forced mentally to question your reason for using it). Something for nothing! Free show!

pulled crowds into their less theatrical structures by giving audiences the same showmanship elements in their own way. American Can took the audience up on the stage by letting folks make tin cans by pressing a button. On peak days, people waited an hour and a half to get a tin can bank worth ten cents.[3] Conflict was there: Chrysler provided it with daredevil racing spills. Personality was there: Barney Oldfield, Aunt Jemima competing successfully with the great Sally Rand. Life was there. Demonstrators galore. Woe unto the booth without life or motion. Sex—plenty of it—in beautiful girl demonstrators. Magic, by General Electric, animals by Sinclair and others.

Now one noticeable exception, itself a triumph in showmanship. The smart young men of *Time-Fortune*, sensing the need for a sharp contrast in the maelstrom, provided a quiet well-bred spot simply to sit down and meet friends. A shrewd analysis of its type of reader—and a smart goodwill concession!

So much for the Century of Progress and so much for the lessons it teaches. Now for New York's World Fair with probably some new things to teach. To those exhibitors who didn't take the hint from Chicago, it will turn out a sorry lesson. Fortunately, there will be few, for 1939 plans suggest showmanship in a high degree. Not improbably "The Greatest Show on Earth" for some years to come.

Starting with its Preview parade, the New York

[3] Buster Brown Shoes kept two machines busy X-raying feet. Swift's "Ask-Me" map was operated by hundreds of thousands of visitors.

Fair already reached a new high in pre-merchandising. The Preview Motorcade, costing the Fair less than $50,000, got direct publicity valued by authorities at over $250,000 in newspapers alone, plus the unpriceable value of a release on seven newsreels. At screen advertising rates this newsreel plug was worth several million dollars. And provided the spark that touched off the activities of some thousand manufacturers of "Fairized" merchandise. Men's Apparel Quality Guild, for example, smartly adopted the Good-Housekeeping-seal idea by awarding a gold emblem to all exhibitors—this emblem to be merchandised by the exhibitors through retail window display and other promotion means.[4]

A spectacular mine rescue, showing the efficiency of modern safety methods and equipment, will be simulated twice a day at Golden Gate's Palace of Mines, to show how miners are rescued in mine disasters. Twice a day the mine will "blow up." Clouds of black smoke and coal dust will issue from the mouth of the shaft. Fire and broken water mains will add to the general pandemonium. Bells will ring and whistles screech.

To the rescue—siren wailing—will speed a rescue truck of the United States Bureau of Mines. Into

[4] Without a Grover Whalen, the Golden Gate fell back on sure-fire standard showmanship formula, used young and beautiful Zoe Dell Lantis, previously a dancer from Yan Hill, Oregon. Wearing a pirate's costume, of course, to tie in with the Fair theme of "Treasure Island," she visited Governors, Mayors and political bigwigs wherever there was a camera; and whenever there wasn't a camera they quickly got one. Within six months Zoe was the world's most photoed girl. The exposition clipping bureau sent in 108,000 different published pictures of her.

the smoke and flames and fire-damp will plunge the rescue workers, protected by goggles and self-contained breathing apparatus. A few moments later they will return, bearing forth the "injured" on stretchers. Their "broken limbs" will be set in splints, their "wounds" cared for medically, and they will be revived by pulmotors, their "lives" saved.

Visitors will also see replicas of typical ore bodies of some of the world's most famous mines. A cross section of the Butte district will show the vein formation, tunnel structure and shafts. A little farther along a reproduction of the Park City mother lode will be reproduced. Miners operating drills and mucking machines, trucks, cars and hoists handling the ore, ventilator fans, water seeping slowly through the tunnel roof and many other realistic features will complete the illusion.

Visitors to Flushing will see many new and amazing things. Most of them sprung from a careful analysis of the public's basic emotional attitude and from profiting from the experiences at Chicago.

Standard Brands for example, was keen enough to profit from its Chicago observations. Visitors to the Standard Brands tower out on Long Island push buttons and see if their daily menu contains a sufficient amount of each vitamin. Many of them are able for the first time to see vitamins, those mysterious ingredients in food necessary to sustain life and health. Two thousand Fair visitors can see these features at one time in the Standard Brands pa-

vilions, covering approximately an acre of ground along Rainbow Avenue, the main boulevard.

Searching for such a human angle for the Men's Apparel exhibit, Bill Segal stood patiently and thoughtfully watching the Pre-View Parade. Instead of watching the parade, however, Bill watched the crowd like a true showman. Like a true showman his subconscious mind registered the fact that the most spontaneous outbursts of applause came when Babe Ruth rode by. Taking this as a cue they built the men's wear exhibit *around* the themes of Man, his Sports, and Clothes, planning the commercial exhibit so folks would have to come through the halls to get into the sports arenas.

In order to get where they could watch Ken Strong at work analyzing football plays the Fair crowds would first have to expose themselves to the footwear advertisement of the Hole-Proof Hosiery Co. offering bicycles on a platform, where all comers could try their skill in an attempt to "pace" a mechanical bicycle. Successful volunteers get a card entitling them to a free pair of "Pacer" Hosiery at their own home-town store. Just to show a bicycle is by no means the exclusive property of a hosiery manufacturer, however. Standard Brands will be using the same device to get over the vitamin idea.

Nearby these whirling wheels, the Alligator Co. of St. Louis manufactures its own artificial weather as an aid to manufacturing customers. Palm Beach, for example, with big thermometers indicating temperatures at various other American cities, the whole

story dramatizing effective selling idea that American cities have higher summer-time temperatures than India, Africa and China. There's Hart-Schaffner & Marx with life-size talking replicas of sports leaders from Bill Tilden with a 37″ chest up to Babe Ruth with a 44″ chest, all of them rooting with tactful showmanship for the idea that the H.S.M. suits fit any figure.

Underwood Typewriter, as a result of experiments with a permanent miniature Fair of its own on the boardwalk at Atlantic City, with a ten foot typewriter banging out huge letters to be delivered dramatically in cities from Coast-to-Coast.

Heinz "57" with the same boardwalk experience will move its four model kitchens to the San Francisco Fair—a story of the American Kitchen in four parts. As a visitor comes through the door of the kitchen he breaks a photo-ray which after a moment (a) darkens three of the kitchens to concentrate interest on the fourth and (b) touches off an electrically transcribed story of the kitchen in view.

Bassett Jones developed a unique fireworks show which will go on simultaneously from three parts of the grounds, a combination of light, fire, sound and water. The water column will rise 250 feet in the air and the colored water will mix with gas-colored fumes. The spectacle will be visible for miles around.

Now, having examined the things that people *get* from the World's Fairs, big or little, let's see if there isn't a further observation to be made from what we've seen. It's going to be a simple one:

Convention booths or exhibits—wherever and whenever you find them—repeat the same opportunity for showmanship to be found at Chicago or Flushing. Gates Ferguson, for example, in charge of promotion for the Postal Telegraph Company jacked up florist telegraph business 40 per cent with a series of exhibits at their annual conventions. Appearing as a speaker on their program, he would send telegrams from the convention to leading florists throughout the world. Cities were illuminated on a huge map as responses came back. Recognizing that a certain young lady (who, incidentally, sold advertising for the FTDA magazine) was a favorite daughter of the convention, Mr. Ferguson brought *her* onto the platform with him, presented her with enough orchids to stun even a florist's convention.

At the Women's Industries Exposition, held in New York, the Empire Gold Buying Company scored again in competition with other booths costing ten times more. At a cost of only $25 it ran, on a continuous projector, a four-minute movie, *Mickey Mining Gold in Alaska.* A few extra feet of added advertising film reminded people, in natural association, that they could "mine" gold in their own homes. People stood four deep to watch this commercial picture. And more adults than kids. Or, take the Socony-Vacuum Oil Exhibit at Rockefeller Center. Seven thousand people go into that exhibit every day. Do they go to see oil wells working? Unfortunately, no. They want to see a map of the world on which you can press a button and see the *Normandie* leaving

Cherbourg. By the way, what does the *Normandie* use for oil? Nothing but Socony-Vacuum. Another feature of this map-of-the-world exhibit is a screen on which United Press news is flashed, direct from the teletype. As each message comes through, a light flashes on the huge map, showing, with surprising ease and astonishing interest, the exact location of the city where that news originates.

So why wait for a World's Fair to happen? Or a convention? Why not make it happen? Run your *own* fair. Instead of sharing the limelight with other visitors, take it all. Costs money? Not necessarily. Manufacturers, who pay thousands of dollars for expensive display space in dealers' windows or at World's Fairs, notoriously neglect the opportunity to set an effective showcase in their own reception lobbies.[5]

The good promotion work to be done by 750 manufacturers at the World's Fair doesn't compare with the work that *could* have been done by 75,000 others who stayed at home if all 75,000 had conscientiously availed themselves of every opportunity for "exhibitionism" in their own back yards. Van Zant and Walter's study of recurrent automobile shows indicates that only one exhibit in three takes advantage of the simple, known principles of showmanship.

It takes the factor of extra expense, or vast green pastures far away, to make businessmen appreciate the World's Fair. Though reaching fewer people in

[5] Not "Mitch" Thorsen, however. The waiting room of Thorsen and Ritchie (insurance) is a veritable museum of the world's most interesting exhibits of famous insurance episodes. Framed and hung under bright lights. Photographs of policies issued to Charles Dickens. To Napoleon.

the gross, they probably could do a nice, uncompetitive job in their own back yards with a bigger net for much less per capita.

Manufacturers coming home from their World's Fair exhibits—some of them anyway—may realize that they have returned to the place where they should have started. Why wait for fairs to do what you can do yourself? Be a little World's Fair of your own. Give your promotion the atmosphere of a scheduled event.[6] Give it always a plus interest. The

[6] Here's one little example of what planning for events can accomplish:

In April, 1931, Cooperative Electric Refrigeration Exhibits were held in Hackensack, Englewood, Ridgewood, Camden, Trenton, Elizabeth, Newark, Jersey City and Paterson.

The local sales outlets distributed 25,000 printed invitations two weeks prior to the opening. Many invitations were delivered by personal call. Twelve illuminated highway signs spread the news on all main highways radiating out of Camden. Posters were placed in buses. Newspaper advertisements appeared a week prior and during the show in all leading papers. The Camden *Courier* brought out a special section on the opening day and put on a 15-minute broadcast. Lectures and music each day. A door prize of one electric refrigerator was given away and was won by a Camden woman. Total cost of the show was $2,055, including the refrigerator prize. About half this expenditure was for newspaper advertising. Less than one week after the show each exhibitor was given a territorially arranged list of 3,000 prospect names. Refrigerator sales at the end of 30 days, traceable to the show, amounted to $85,000.

Here's still another:

There were 12 local exhibitors in the Kansas City Refrigeration Show and Cooking School and only domestic types of electric refrigerators were shown. The secretary-manager of the local Electric League served as manager of the show. The Cooking School was conducted each afternoon. The show was held in a large garage decorated with potted and cut flowers, a spring atmosphere. No gifts, souvenirs or prizes were offered and there was no music.

Newspaper advertising and store window displays constituted the principal publicity. Admission was free and the attendance was approximately 8,000.

Yet the sales outlets participating in the show reported 540 electric refrigerators sold as a direct result of the exhibit. Of the 2,530 prospects obtained, 790 were considered as being reasonably certain to buy.

"event" aspect gives a proposition realism, timeliness, and promises personalities. Here come the elephants! Something is going to happen! Model homes, parades, cotton weeks, safety committees, the Golden Gloves, Macy parades, beauty contests, refrigeration shows, Buck Rogers clubs, sponsor luncheons, pep breakfasts, booster dinners, book-of-the-month clubs, first nights, May Day sales—when you roll them all up into one and squeeze out the essence, what have you got?

Concentrated Interest!

Beechnut created a minor fair of its own with a miniature motorized circus. The circus includes a "street parade" of doll-characters on a circular motorized track, inside three rings in which animated cartoon characters performed on trapezes. Music furnished by loud speaker phonograph records. The circus was mounted on the back of a truck, enclosed in glass, supplemented with an exhibit of Beechnut products. It was used in connection with sampling activities, and permanently at Atlantic City.

Some day somebody's going to "showmanize" the Smithsonian Institution and give it its first chance to win enough public good will to place it on speaking terms with a Class A check book. In the New York *Sun*, May 1937, in a story entitled "Uncle Sam is a Showman," Frank George mentions a device which permits visitors to the Bureau of Standards to bend a five inch steel bar with the push of a finger.

At the Golden Gate, the University of California

puts an unexpected touch of dramatics into it's exhibit on Eugenics in the $200,000 Hall of Science Exhibit. Mendel's Laws of inheritance were illustrated. It is possible for a husband to bring his wife to the exhibit and find out what their children will look like. This was accomplished through the use of dolls. The husband chose a doll which had his own characteristics, and a doll which featured the more prominent characteristics of his wife. Then, by pressing a button, a doll popped up to show him what children resulting from a union of the first two dolls will look like.

These affairs all gather significance as the element of ceremony is added—as they become not only real; they become events. A contest winner gets new thrills and glory when some quasi-regal ceremony is created to crown him "King of the Ko-Kos." When New York's junior advertising club, the Association of Advertising Men, presented a musical comedy at the Waldorf, an immediate sale was created for the expensive box seats by calling them a "Hall of Fame of Advertising." Sinclair Day, a scheduled event, gets interest for gas stations.

The Economical-Cunningham drugstores in Detroit rocked the town with a Baseball Party. Thirty-six thousand seats were given to children (3,000 to employees, suppliers, etc.) for writing appropriate essays. Play-by-play descriptions of both games were broadcast by two local radio stations. Local newspapers treated it the same as a regular league

game—better, in fact, because of unusual human interest features.

Ediphone adapted this general idea for big city uses by dramatizing a sales contest with an imaginary race down Madison Avenue. Realism called it the "Madison Avenue Sweepstakes." Ediphone showed imaginary pictures of the race with realistic Madison Avenue settings including well-known stores.

Circus parades are legendary. Have you ever run a parade? So many of us have been on the sidewalk end of so many parades that we seldom picture ourselves in the role of marshals. Yet, there are many times when a parade will be helpful. Department stores have used them. Notably R. H. Macy. Newspapers have used them. Standard Oil of Indiana paraded its Live Power displays before millions. General Electric paraded its sales contest winners from the Rex Cole showroom to the *Monarch of Bermuda* ready for sailing in New York harbor.

Sophisticated New Yorkers throng the streets on Thanksgiving Day to see Mickey Mouse and Ferdinand the Bull in Macy's Mile Parade. Try a parade sometime. All you need is a police permit, your nerve, and enough showmanship to entertain the crowd. Plenty of music, advance publicity, color, variety, a THEME (otherwise known as the PURPOSE)—and, most of all, the capability to create an event.

Parades, fairs, carnivals, public shows—all those

places where showmanship, real and traditional, plays the leading role—continue year after year to draw crowds. Four times a day for three weeks 600 people crowded into Macy's Hobby Show to see fashion shows, cooking demonstrations, sports exhibits. Publicity ran continuously in the newspapers. Sales on hobby merchandise not only jumped immediately, but have since been sustained at better levels. The attendance was 300,000. This exceeds considerably the average County Fairs which range in attendance from a few hundred in some small ambitious community to the more than 800,000 at a recent Illinois State Fair. Hearn's, capitalizing the established fact that a public show will draw crowds, produced *Rigoletto* in its store theater and gave the opera twice a day.

Even the New York Park Department is gradually developing a flair for showmanship that would put many a professional genius to shame. New York newspapers, for example, regularly carry items that read like this:

> In Heckscher Playground, Central Park, this afternoon seven men met to determine in the presence of a partisan audience the winnah and new champeen in the art of horseshoe pitching.

or

> There will be sixteen male quartet contestants in the Manhattan Barber Shop Sweepstakes, or sixty-four singers all told, and what they will do to "Sweet Adeline" and "I've Been Working on the Railroad," it is rumored, is going to put a lot of old-timers to shame.

These municipal promoters not only plan their intracity contests so cleverly as to gain a welcome as real news, they conduct them with so much vivacious ingenuity that the big New York newspapers gladly give whole columns of space to their describing.

10

PICTURES AND MOTION PICTURES

Films, with sound or without, are advertising's newest major development. Advice on how to apply showmanship to the use of films might be carrying coals to Newcastle. Good pictures are showmanship taken straight. But we may, perhaps, venture this much: there are not enough good films used. We hold no brief for films as more economical than other advertising media; but, speaking solely for showmanship, we do believe that many smart advertisers have as yet no idea of their real possibilities.

Film circulation is sold f.o.b. the prospect's mind. No other medium can promise so much—and keep the promise.

Frank Lawton likens the film message to a sort of sales telepathy. You have a mental picture of what you want to sell a prospect. When you change this image into words or even illustration, you are taking chances that these transmissions may not form the same picture in his mind that they do in yours. A film will bridge that doubtful gap in one reliable jump.

Your available audience will run, perhaps, as high as 20,000,000 people. Distribution is handled through the following:

1. Theaters (through booking exchanges)[1]
2. Institutional outlets (through booking exchanges): schools, YMCA's, churches, clubs
3. Private outlets: homes, halls, conventions
4. Dealers: windows, auditoriums, sales floors
5. Sound trucks
6. State fairs.

The cost of making a sound film that won't antagonize these audiences may be anywhere between $1,000 and $50,000. Successful jobs have been done at both figures. So a show costing $5,000 may be shown to a million people at 1/10 of a cent per person plus an average distributing cost of ¼ to ½ cent.

Of course, pictures made especially for trade showings, to dealers, distributors, etc., for sales purposes, run to a higher unit cost per person reached. But no one will dispute the efficacy of such a film medium for selling to the trade. It gives entree, attention, enthusiasm, goodwill, interest, and the opportunity to plant an idea firmly with both feet.

But——

Let us caution you against anything except Class A talent if you want to do a good selling job. The woods are full of cameramen, script writers, each

[1] Half the movie theaters in the United States will show commercial films.

posing as a complete motion-picture service. Before you deliver yourself into the hands of a commercial picturemaker, be sure you find out what he has done before. See it, in fact. Because in films, as in no other medium, bad presentations do real damage. Not only do they fail to sell; they actually antagonize. Poor radio commercials can be tuned out. Pages in indifferent publications can be ignored. Outdoor signs can be snubbed with a turn of the head. But woe unto you or your goods if you ever force an audience to sit through anything less than a *good* picture.

Good talking pictures, as we have said, cost money. If you haven't the money, or can't borrow it, talkies are not for you.

Still ——

There are lots of other children in the film family. Starting with old-fashioned magic lanterns, more modernly slide films, upward through slide films plus records, then silent movies, you have other vehicles for doing a good sales job. With good luck you may get a good slide film, silent, for a hundred dollars. From there on, the sky's the limit.

Several chapters back we mentioned how E. J. Keilly's infant daughter's personality helped sell zippered infants' wear to tough buyers. Mrs. Keilly and the Child Labor Act stood in the way of sending the effective infant to repeat that job in person in all 48 states. How, except by a film, could Keilly tell that story nationally—in every department store in the land? A whole sales campaign was built around the film. A booklet of 17 stills was sold to

stores at 2 cents a copy. Eight stills were blown up for interior display. Result: *Results!*

Three Women, a cooking picture made for General Electric, scored so big in Atlanta that when showings were made later in small nearby towns they had to turn people away. Prospect lists were built—and direct sales made.

There is no end to the variety of jobs that films are doing. A. T. & T. estimates that over 50,000,000 people see telephone company films annually. (Leonard Ormerod pioneered this work while with the Bell of Pennsylvania in 1919. One of his early films was a tie-up with the forest fire fighters—an action theme that secured ready distribution. The Bell advertising plug was limited to showing how the telephone played its part in forest fire fighting.)

Ford used a film (*The Honeymoon V8*) to exploit its exhibit at the San Diego Fair. It was a travelogue of a couple visiting the Fair. Other Ford films take you through the mighty River Rouge plants, tell the fascinating story of the saga of Ford. Goodrich produced *Love, Honor and Obey the Law* featuring Harry Langdon and promoting safer driving. A contest tie-up gives the audience a chance to win prizes by reporting at the end of the show all the law violations shown in the film. Boot Drug Company in England used an animated cartoon in color to dramatize the battle with germs. G. E. Refrigerator and Specialty Divisions have made several pictures for salesmen to show in a prospect's home. At Fremont (Nebr.), a town of only 11,000, a Leonard Refrigera-

tor talking picture drew four hundred women to the store of Jake Kavich, despite zero weather which prevailed on the day the picture was booked for a showing.

Business talkies, sound slide films and the sound truck are attaining such great success in business that "mechanized promotion" has become an important advertising term. The surface of useful selling possibilities hasn't been scratched. Suburban estates are being sold with films by Previews, Inc. Polygraphic used a film to put over a sales contest. The leading salesmen were the honored actors and were showered with prizes. General Electric has advertised its film in *Collier's*, has shown its various films to a hundred million people, including duplication. G. E. has even used Technicolor.

Add to the other advantages of films the time saved in introducing a new idea. By that we mean that you save, let's say, three weeks over a series of ordinary meetings. That means your benefits start accruing three weeks earlier. The picture film is flexible geographically. It can be timed very closely. It can be tied in rather easily with most other promotion. But it can't be done overnight. To shoot a picture and get it used takes time. And—if your picture is no good, you collect enemies. So be sure you have an interesting script, good actors, good directors.

Training Films

Films are the perfect vehicle for training salesmen. In training, films make an actuality of mental

telepathy. Chrysler sales executives cut out 62 days of traveling and endless repetition with better understanding all around by sending out films to tell the whole story.

Motion pictures can be shown at:

1. Home office conventions
2. Regional company conventions
3. Branch offices
4. Dealer and distributor meetings
5. Association meetings.

A. & P. used films to interest 40,000 employees in Coffee. Educational story—sales up. American Can gives salesmen a means for selling brewers the canned beer idea. Johns Manville uses a "before and after" technique to show how an attic can be converted into a livable room. *Green Lights* is a Du Pont picture that convinces auto refinishers that cheap paints don't pay.

The Magic Circle, made for the Perfect Circle Company, was shown to 15,000 automotive supply men per month for three months. Simmons Company uses a sound slide film to show how furniture changes with modern trends and how Simmons follows the trend.

Miscellaneous special-purpose films include such as those prepared by Eli Lilly (drugs) for showing to medical meetings.

Coca-Cola, one of the first to use films for training, issues a film a month, doing such jobs as teach-

ing refrigeration, getting advertising tie-ups, promoting coolers, etc.

Standard Brands uses films for training because yards of words wouldn't explain half as well as a few feet of film how to turn an old-fashioned bakery into a modern one. An Irish grocer and a German baker are shown as friends of long standing. Enter the love motive of the daughter of the baker and the son of the grocer. Enter Standard Brands, Inc., with the solicitor who points the way to success for the baker, the way to despair for the grocer's son. To the grocer comes the light of reason. To his son—the light of love.

The picture—to take it as an example—starts off with a short explanatory speech by the president. From that point on, the featured actors enter and the picture uses the entertainment dialogue to support the business dialogue. Because the film lasts one hour and ten minutes it has been necessary to make the story human enough to keep the salesmen interested. Besides showing the salesmen how to sell and help the dealer in his merchandising, the picture attempts to portray the importance of the salesman's services not only to the baker and grocer, but also to the community which these retailers serve. After showing to sales force, the picture was intelligently routed to regional association meetings in grocery and bakery fields.

11

SALES CONTESTS

SALES contests have a spectacular record for quick sales results. No other trick in the sales bag can get results so quickly. Nor boast so amazing a variety of profitable applications.

The New Yorker Hotel, for example, has run contests among bellhops to increase sales of valet service. At the other extreme, a contest among the collectors for a big bank which took over a business that was owed a million dollars in small accounts brought in money at one of the lowest collection costs in history.

An industrial engineer tells how a contest technique improved quality of production in a paper mill where 9 per cent of production had been discarded as "seconds." The engineer persuaded the president to allow the sales department to run a contest between various plants in this company's properties. Four thousand employees were thrown into a contest. "Seconds" dropped from 9 to 2 per cent. The Philadelphia Orchestra, in its drive to sell seats, ran a contest among the 450 social register members of the sales organization. Regulation "sales contest" tech-

nique was employed throughout, with score cards and quota thermometers in the campaign offices, weekly luncheons for workers, prizes.

The Marion Gray Company used another form of a contest to develop better working habits among its sales force. Nine departments in the company each turned in a separate rating on each salesman. These ratings were averaged to get a man's final position. The ratings depended on regularity in sales reports, sales gains, increased mail orders, cooperative advertising secured, collection assistance, returning samples in good condition, legibility of orders, securing reasonable delivery dates, advance style tips, and 24 other factors too often neglected for lack of such encouragement.

The reason the sales contest works so well, and is so invariably successful in all sorts of effort where hardly anything else will work, is not hard to figure out. Fundamentally the sales contest is the lowest common denominator of showmanship.

In one of his pictures, someone asked Eddie Cantor, "How many people work here?" His answer was, "Oh, about twenty per cent."

In other words, men seldom work as hard as they could. Do you?

The world swarms with mediocrity. But aside from the dearth of intrinsic ability in people there is another great limitation. Most people don't try as hard as they could.[1]

[1] *How to Run Better Sales Contests* by Zenn Kaufman. Published by Harper & Brothers.

Professor Scott of the University of St. Louis says, "No man works any harder than absolutely necessary except under emotional stress brought on by fear or heat of competition." Since it is impossible to keep salesmen keyed up to their best efforts by continually writing "pep" letters threatening to fire them, the sales contest has been devised. It is essentially an emotional sham battle to make a group of men work harder. It does. And will.[2]

Conflict—better known as "competition"—is the recognized key to interest. And effort. A nation-wide survey of salesmen reveals that 90 per cent "like contests, work harder in them, think they are fair, believe their fellow salesmen work harder in contests, want more of them." A separate tabulation was made of reports that indicated that the writer himself had never won anything worth while. These replies tallied with the others.

Too many sales managers vitiate the essential antagonism of a good sales contest by keeping contestants too far apart. They don't promote the clinches. Close-in fighting is vital. A good example

[2] The world is still waiting for an effective one-man sales contest. Electrolux comes closest with an "indoor golf" game in which a salesman tries to beat his own record for skill in making appointments by telephone. The salesman places a cardboard golf course before himself, puts his prospect cards in one corner and his telephone in another. He then places a penny on the first tee of the golf course, takes a few practice swings of the dial mechanism, and starts his golf game sales campaign. He starts calling prospects for demonstration appointments, counts a stroke for each unsuccessful call, starts a new hole every time he makes an appointment. Score for any hole is the number of unsuccessful calls made to get the date. Score is kept on a regular score card in one corner of the chart.

is the "Best Man" contest of Pilot Life run by Bart Leiper. Men were paired off as in real prize fights. Each man was carefully matched with someone whose sales volume was about the same as his own. Each loser had to sign for his winner a printed statement pasted on a crystal paperweight admitting that he had been licked in an open fight. Here was a real contest. Conflict was narrowed down to arm's length.

The chief duty of showmanship is to sharpen the contestant's inspection of the prize. To remind him continually that the *other* man is likely to get it. Real conflict, then, follows quite naturally. A contest plan has at least five essentials. Let's examine the various ways by which showmanship can be applied to these five essentials:

1. Theme
2. Timing
3. Scoring
4. Follow-up
5. Prizes.

1. *The Theme*

The contest theme is the "change in scenery." As such it is, of course, purely showmanship. Basically the theme is nothing more than an interesting presentation of some naturally exhilarating pastime. All the old themes are fairly familiar, as, for example, horse race or boat race. But here are a few *newer* ideas that you can perhaps convert or modify for your own use.

1. *School Daze.* You start in kindergarten and work your way up through college. When you get to college your allowance begins. Originated by Washington Gas Light Company.
2. *Detective* (or G-Man). Search for Missing Sales. Every man his own Hawkshaw. Merchandising ideas are the clues! Originated by Westinghouse Lamp Company.
3. *A Trip to the Savings Bank.* A chart marks off into steps the route from the home office to the bank. As his sales go up, each man moves towards the bank where cash prizes are waiting.
4. *Atlantic City or Bust.* On a big map of the United States, laid out in the same way as the bank contest just mentioned, the men move toward Atlantic City. The winner actually gets a real trip free.
5. *Leo—The Lion Tamer.* American Type Founders awarded Violet, a goat, to their worst branch. Immediately afterwards, the inverse angle was used in which Leo, the lion, was the hero and branches strove to win a desk trophy replica of Leo and high men were known as Chief Lion Tamers.
6. *Dollar Hunting at the County Fair.* Each week, leading salesmen were allowed to participate in games of the type played at the County Fair. Winners were given extra prizes. Originated by Birmingham Gas Company.

2. *Timing*

of prize contests presents two obvious opportunities for intelligent showmanship. First, as to the date of the contest. Second, as to its length. Besides these, there are many ways in which timing can be used as a vehicle for showmanship. Timeliness of theme, for example:

1. During the heart of the Depression, the Southland Life Insurance Co. ran a "Make the Wolf at your Door a *RUG* for your Floor" contest. Each man was sent a cardboard wolf divided into ten sections. Each section of chopped wolf represented 10 per cent of the allotted quota. Each quota buster was given a handsome wolfskin rug for his own fireside.
2. When the president of a large national organization was expected to visit a certain branch office as a guest, a formal dinner party was planned. A sharp effective contest was run off to see who should have the privilege of sitting with the president at the head table.
3. There's always the regular *seasonal* interest.

When no other suitably appropriate relation to time is easily available, the length of the contest itself can be used to emphasize the basic idea. A department store used a 14-day sales contest to merchandise a forthcoming 14-day sale. A power company ran a 50-day contest to celebrate a fiftieth anniversary.

On the other hand, Carl Stroehman, a baker, successfully broke *all* the rules by running a contest of uncertain length. He wanted a 10 per cent increase. The contest was to run till he got it. Ten weeks was estimated as normal. But Stroehman offered to put an *extra* $10 into the prize kitty for each week *under* the estimated ten in which the goal was secured. His contest was over in three weeks.

3. *The Scoring Plan*

The scoring plan of a contest is the focal point of the conflict. If a contest is the good game it should

be, the scoring becomes the "rules." The most important thing is to frame your rules to provide patently the fairest possible conflict

(a) man against man
(b) man against par.

This requires a careful analysis of the "flow of business" and of each man's capacity for getting his definite share of that business. The fixing of quotas is probably the hardest single job in planning a contest. Bad quota setting is responsible for more contest failures than any other single fault. Setting proper quotas means, of course, hours of hard work that few managers are willing to undertake. On the other hand, many companies that *do* go to the trouble of setting fair quotas fail to provide enough clerical labor to furnish a follow-up, frequent score bulletins and summaries. Thus they turn what might be an inspiring battle into a game of blind man's buff. Many companies that spend thousands on a single contest have the shortsighted economy not to spend a couple of hundred dollars more to hire a girl to keep figures hotly up to date. What happens? The goal (the prize, honor, beating the other fellow) fades into a hazy picture of nothing at all. When this smoke screen of uncertain sales figures settles down over your contest, it is automatically over. The contestants might as well go back to sleep.

4. *The Follow-Up*

A successful sales contest takes more than an in-

genious plan. Or clever presentation. It takes selling. It takes persistence.

One sales manager, faced with the criticism that all of his elaborate follow-up was unnecessary, ran one contest with absolutely no follow-up. It was a miserable flop. The comparison convinced his directors that his follow-up plans were not only practical, but necessary. Note the skill with which some sales managers carry the main "theme" in their follow-up reminders.

1. In a Thanksgiving turkey contest, Cashman Laundry kept live turkeys in cages around the plant.
2. Atlantic City or Bust contest. Box of salt-water taffy sent to each salesman with a note expressing the hope that he would enjoy more of this typical confection in his possible visit to the famous resort.
3. Trip to the Bank. The follow-up included checks, bankbooks, deposit slips.
4. A laundry offered its routemen baskets of groceries for certain increases in business. One fine morning the routeman's wife received a box of Corn Flakes in her mail. That is, a box *without* the corn flakes. There was nothing in the box but this note from the laundry: "What! No corn flakes! That's right. You must win your groceries to get them in this contest."
5. In a Stock Market contest, Polygraphic installed a regular stock ticker and sent out reports on yellow ticker tape.

Continual reminder, mind you! No contact with salesmen is too insignificant to become a vehicle for follow-up. One enterprising company pasted printed labels—"100% or Bust!"—on washroom towel racks, paychecks. Even on paper plates in a company cafeteria.

Every line of copy, every picture, offers an opportunity to (a) echo the contest theme and (b) make the prizes seem more desirable. Which brings us to the fifth and final opportunity for contest showmanship: the prize itself.

5. *The Prize*

Apply your showmanship to the selection of the prize and to building it up. Guardian Life offered an 18-hole game of golf with the president of the company as a prize in its "golf" sales contest. Socony used 8 cents, 88 cents, $8.88, and $88.88 as prizes in its Eighters Club contest. The Eighters Club was formed by the sales force to promote an 8 per cent increase in sales. In a drive to get sweater dry cleaning business, a laundry gave sweaters as prizes. Actual stocks—the real engraved certificates—were used as prizes in a stock market contest by W. R. Bull.

In the way of keeping the contestants constantly stirred up:

American Type Founders mailed all contestants actual checks for first prize. Unsigned. Offered to sign the checks when they won. John Kumler used electric clocks as a prize in one contest. He put a clock in every man's home at the start of the contest. The losers had to give up their clocks. Robert Werblow of Polygraphic gave a sample dinner party on an ocean liner to convince his men that they should win the cruises offered as prizes in his contest. Again emphasizing the genius of salesmanship, someone

achieves success by going completely against all rules. American Type Founders, for example, offered a goat, Violet, as a booby prize. Horrible descriptions of Violet's odor helped discourage the branches from any romantic ideas for entertaining Violet. Honor is a great thing to have. Dishonor is an even greater thing not to have.

Finally, in sales contests, you can go right through the list of showmanship elements and find them all intelligently applied to the running of successful contests. Check this list in planning your next contests.

Sound: In a boat race contest a fake description of the start of the race was broadcast to the roomful of salesmen who were to finish the race. Complete amplifying apparatus was hooked into a radio. This cost $12.76. The radio cost $12.00. The extra 76 cents furnished a Victor record of Sousa's "Stars and Stripes" to provide an imaginary U. S. Navy Band.

Smell: Don't forget Violet.

Pictures: If you can't afford to draw your own, cut them out of magazines. Never try to tell your whole story with words and numbers. Always use a progress chart. Even if your men can't see it, use a chart yourself. Take pictures of your chart and send them to the men. And use lots of pictures of the prizes.

Motion: At a meeting a baseball was thrown through a pane of glass on which was lettered "Quota." This combination of sound, surprise, conflict, motion was effective.

Mystery: A Hawkshaw contest immediately appeals to the love of mystery. By keeping the nature of a sales bonus a mystery, results were doubled for one company. Show a caricature of the boss saying "Wonder who'll win?"

Taste: That candy?

Conflict: Quality Bakers of America opened one sales contest with a carefully framed impromptu argument between two men. Just as it was about to turn into a fist fight, the sales manager stepped in, separated the scrappers, told the boys to fight it out in the coming sales contest. They did.

Realism: Entry blanks make any sporting event a bit more real. Use them. Next time you run a horse race contest, print sweepstake tickets.

Life and Personality: "Dopester Dan" is the character commentator planted behind one horse race sales contest. He's a wise guy. And can he kibitz on the respective standing and probable finish of the various contestants! J. Slump, the phony character who tried to break up Polygraphic's sales contest, is wisely kept in the contest till its finish to antagonize contestants. General Electric puts life into its horse race with photos of division heads sitting on wooden cutout horses.

Action: One gas company let men throw paint-dipped baseballs at pictures of the captains of the teams opposing them. One throw for each Electrolux sold!

Timeliness: Electrolux used current interest in the Dionnes by organizing a Quintuplet Club for men who sold 5 refrigerators.

After the Contest

Good showmen, like good salesmen, don't forget the customer after he's sold. Play up your winners after the contest is over. Give them a big hand. Spend a little *extra* money on them. Do something for them that you don't *have* to do. While it is true that the finish of a contest presents no opportunity to make *that contest* any more successful, there are two excellent reasons why it is good business to end with all flags flying and bugles blowing loudly.

A flying finish to a contest, obviously, is a great morale builder. One of the auxiliary advantages of sales contests is their value in raising morale and creating goodwill. In this light the finish of the contest becomes doubly important since it is the last taste of the campaign. A poor finish is to a good sales contest what poor coffee is to a good meal. A brilliant finish shows that your heart is in the right place. The very fact that you don't have to pile on additional last-minute encouragement makes it the more appreciated by your men.

The finish of one contest can, moreover, help to pave the way for the next. The more glory you can pile on the winner, the better he feels; and when you run your next contest that memory remains. What may only be memories for the few weeks following one contest will turn into anticipation when your next contest starts. If everyone remembers the glorious finish of the last drive, it's going to be much easier to create a glorious picture for the finish of the next one. Contests are lost or won on the first day!

The success of any contest depends on how real you make the finish look—at the start! Every man who decides that day to win a contest is hard to lick. And more men are going to decide to win if they have fresh in their minds a picture of the glories of the last campaign.

There are many ways in which you can build interest around the finish of your contest. A dinner party or a more informal feed of any kind will always help. One company has taken motion pictures of its

winners. Rex Cole arranged a special edition of a daily newspaper and provided a motorcycle escort for his winners. Another company has flown over the factory a flag bearing a winner's name. Another hired special taxicabs to help winners get home with all their prizes.

Take photographs of your winners—frame them. Get a human interest angle into these photos and the local newspapers or trade papers will print them.

A laundry used small laundry bags to give winners their cash prizes. Another company, at the end of a "Heavy Hitters Home Run Contest," enclosed cash prizes in paper baseballs.

There are a thousand ways to give a bang-up ending to a contest. They're not hard to think of. Try them next time. Your men may think you're not so bad after all, and the next contest will be just a little easier to run.

12

SHOWMANSHIP IN TRAINING SALESMEN

ACTUAL dramatics—stage, floodlights, and all—have reached the point where the New York Sales Executives Club talks of holding an annual prize competition to find every year the best dramatic sales skits. Like films, plays offer the full show-business bag of tricks for getting an idea over to an often apathetic and not always overintelligent group of salesmen.

Eleven road companies traveled simultaneously to bring Hotpoint's six-hour show, *The Load Builders*, to cities in a short season. Ingredients of this show were three people, simple stage settings, a few talking records, some talking pictures, a few musical records. Since this Hotpoint show comes near being a high spot in this particular line of selling, let *Printers' Ink* tell us how the show is handled.

The program starts after a couple of musical selections, with a few introductory remarks by an executive of the local utility company. Then, an explanation of the purpose of the program by the Hotpoint district manager, who, with one of the company's sales specialists and a home economist, makes

up the cast. Then, a "news reel" in sound featuring conversations between top executives of leading utility companies. They discuss load building problems and the potentially important place of electric ranges. Then, another sound film in which the president of Edison General Electric Appliance describes the growth of the electric range idea and the opportunity for increasing sales volume of this appliance.

Next, a unique feature of the program—the "Voice of Calrod," which from this point on acts as master of ceremonies. The "Voice" is a talking record emanating from a representation of the Calrod heating unit which is featured in the Hotpoint range. Then, another sound film in which the general sales manager outlines a practical sales story for overcoming the price objections, an idea which is further developed in a stage dialogue between the characters representing a utility sales manager and a discouraged salesman. This paves the way for a dramatic demonstration by the home economist of the "everyday cooking miracles" which can be wrought with a Hotpoint range. This ends the first half of the program.

The second half of the program takes up the product. Sound films show how the Calrod unit is produced and why it is efficient and there is a stage demonstration of its durability. Then comes presentation of the selling equipment which is to be offered, and a stage pantomime illustrating the forms of advertising which General Electric will run during the year. Then a sketch illustrating the need for electric hot water equipment in the home. Then the district manager describes the features of the new Hotpoint water heaters.

Here's how Bauer & Black dramatized a window display at a sales convention. The item featured was the Pal athletic supporter—sold principally to boys between 12 and 18. The display featured Emerson Norton, Olympic champion. *Advertising Age* says:

The curtain on the convention stage rose to reveal a complete installation of this display in a window of the hypothetical "Whataman Drug Co." Onto the scene walk four youngsters. Their attention is caught by the display and they engage in admiring conversation on the Norton physique. Suddenly the central figure seems to come to life and walks forward to greet the boys. It is Emerson Norton in person. Adroit lighting effects had up to this point completely concealed the fact that the figure was anything but the picture used in the regular display. Subsequent action proceeded to bring to life the manner in which a display operates to create a sale. Mr. Norton stepped down and engaged his youthful admirers in conversation. In this discourse, he employed the same messages which are set forth in the printed version of the actual display—and four sales were made.

We had the pleasure of speaking for the Shelby Sales Book Co. at a recent meeting and scheduled just ahead of us was THE WISDOMETER, a board on which was pasted 50 questions concerning Shelby manufacturing policies. Above the board was a strip listing all of the salesmen. These were all covered with tape so that by pulling off six names, blind, a quiz class could be drawn. Joe Mayner stepped to the platform as soon as the two three-man teams were picked and invited man number one to pull off a question. Man number one handed his question to Joe who read "For pulling off this question take $1.00 off the board and try another question. With the crowd laughing good-naturedly, he reached for his second question which read "Buy everybody on your team a drink."

By now the crowd was in the spirit of the quiz class

and the salesman reached for question number three which was "What is the cost of an extra color on Shelby form No. 72?" "$5. per thousand," says the salesman on a wild guess and the stooge in the wings rings the gong as Joe announces, "Sorry, you're wrong, you can't use a color on schedule 72." A judging committee awarded 100 for a perfect answer and fractions of 100 for answers that were partly right. The meeting quizzed itself through some 50 questions with the crowd enjoying the show—and learning at the same time.

Another dramatic production, *Laugh at Winter,* a three-act play with a professional cast put on by Koppers Coke, is also good enough to be described in full.

The play opens on an autumn evening in the Martins' living room with the family shivering and lamenting its heating worries. The first humor is injected when the disgruntled breadwinner observes from a window that his favorite bathing girl poster across the street has been replaced by a Koppers "Laugh at Winter" advertisement. Next, Mrs. Martin finds an advertisement for Koppers in her newspaper. When the husband later hears of the merits of this fuel in the "Five Star Final" news broadcast sponsored by Koppers, his wife decides it's time they gave this fuel a trial. Undue interest in a blonde stenographer complicated Martin's worries at the office the following day as he starts his telephone shopping for Koppers Coke. Examples of good and bad sales talks by dealers are worked into the play, through sound amplification of telephone conversations between dealers and Mr. Martin. Dialogue includes the statement that the dealer presenting the "poor" talk, although doing a "lot of advertising," is "still in the dark ages when it comes to merchandising."

In the prologue, the narrator cited insistence of Frank Bacon on rehearsals twice a week while he was playing in "Lightning," despite the fact that he spoke the same lines nightly for six years. The dealer and the salesman must remember as Bacon did, he points out, that although they may be tired of the story, it is new to their prospects.

As another example of the adaptability of the playlet form, take the Connecticut Mutual's *Behind the Scenes in the Main Office.* Put on at the sales convention, this took the men back a few months, into the main office where and when the convention plans were first being made.

All of the executives of the sales and sales promotion department themselves—personally appeared in this playlet, which faithfully re-enacted an actual conference held a few months previous back in Hartford.

This went over big, for several reasons; it means that the Big Shots of the main office were taking their own medicine, in themselves acting in one of the playlets; it meant that the company took the salesmen into its confidence in showing how the meeting had been planned; and it meant that the first playlet would go over big, since every "actor" was natural and at ease, merely re-acting his own part in an actual conference.

Then came the meat of the program, with short playlets, with from two to eleven people in the casts, on all sorts of phases of the selling process, prospecting, motivation, time control, organized sales talks, etc.

At the close of the convention, "Behind the Scenes at Home," another playlet, showed a salesman just returned from the convention, explaining to two others who did not qualify for the meeting, the good he got from the program and showing just how he was going to capitalize on the convention helps.

These are the words of Ken Mathus who, in the same story in *Printers' Ink*, gives these general pointers for dramatizations.

Here are some points we learned from experience that may help.

1. Subjects for Dramatization
    a. Prospecting
    b. Approach
    c. Interview
    d. Closing
    e. Objections
    f. Motivation
    g. Historical
    h. Time Control and Records
    i. Manufacture, Advantages and Uses of Product
    j. Competition.
2. Vehicles of Dramatization
    a. Playlets
    b. Debates
    c. Mock Trials
    d. Musicales
    e. Allegories
    f. Demonstrations
    g. Soliloquies
    h. Burlesque
    i. Ridicule
    j. Wrong Way vs. Right Way
    k. Comedy Relief.
3. Staging Dramatizations
    a. SCRIPTS, painstakingly prepared by company men or outsiders, should be sent to carefully selected casts in various cities, with instructions for *memorizing* only, paying no attention to the "action" until later.
    b. COACHING, preferably by an outsider, will bring

the touch of "authority" and the dramatic viewpoint, and will put the action on a finished and not an amateur basis.

c. REHEARSING, we found, can best be done in advance of the convention by routing the dramatic coach among various branch offices for a few days direction in each, followed by dress rehearsals just prior to the convention.

4. Showmanship
   a. Emphasis on the visual
   b. Stage "effects"
   c. Create theatrical atmosphere as much as possible through programs, stage settings, etc.
   d. Utilize the surprise element.

So much may be done with dramatizations at sales meetings, and its possibilities for any type of business are so unlimited, that I believe, once you have tried it in place of boring speeches and "papers," you, like us, will never be content to go back to the old method.[1]

Puppet Shows

The Philadelphia Electric Company had a marionette troupe do a five-minute pantomime in their window in the heart of the shopping area. The purpose of the skit was to contrast the old-fashioned kitchen, in which the housewife was a drudge, with the new kitchen in which "Reddy Kilowatt" does all the work. There were 42 performances a day, and at each of them the street was jammed.

Haines's marionettes performed at the New York

[1] Another effective technique—halfway between a speech and a play—is the one used by J. W. McIver of G. E. who presents pantomimes on one side of the stage as illustrations of different points in a speaker's messages.

State Fair for the Department of Agriculture on behalf of the dairy industry. One-act plays were presented. The first disclosed "Madame Cow" on stage dressed in royal purple and wearing a crown. Waving a magic handkerchief, she called forth the elements of milk from the Milky Way. Protein hopped out first, singing of his value to mankind to the tune of "The Man on the Flying Trapeze." Sugar, a red heart with lace edges, peppermint arms and legs, sang "Nobody's Sweetheart Now." Mineral Salts warbled to the tune of "Jingle Bells" and the Vitamin Vanities, garbed in fluffy feathers, sang and danced. Other plays showed the "before and after" of the life of a farmer who mended his ways and worked with the state milk program. The same shows were put on in department stores and schools.

Shell Oil has staged similar marionette playlets at Pacific Coast automobile shows. Even at a medical convention, puppets were successfully used to advertise a school for mentally deficient children. The puppets stopped traffic, the booth was jammed at every performance. To win the enthusiasm of busy physicians speaks well for this advertising medium.

13

FACE-TO-FACE SHOWMANSHIP

IT IS in face-to-face selling that showmanship does some of its most effective jobs. We don't mean to say that men should make fools of themselves by attempting to put on one-man shows or circuses. However, you may agree that the elements which make a good circus, or vaudeville show, or motion picture, or play, are the things the buyer wants. Why not try to give them to him?

It is not our thought that every act of business be pedestaled, as it were; preceded figuratively by a convoy of angels playing ruffles and truffles on trios of cornets. But there is something in the plan of William Edward Rudge, a salesman of fine printing, who, when he was going to make a call, used to send ahead two little page boys in bright uniforms. Preceding him by half an hour with huge samples, these boys would proceed authoritatively to take over the prospect's office, setting up samples on every chair, desk and piece of furniture in sight.

Rube Waddell, the ball player, used to sell candy. Rube was a better pitcher than philosopher. But he

had learned to handle one ball at a time. He carried a set of 39 cards. Each card listed a buyer's objection—with the answer. Whenever and whatever objection came up—out came the cards. "No money?" "Objection Number Fourteen!" says Rube. "Here's the answer to that one! Let's go!"

We told how Howarth Boyle showed his house-to-house salesmen to show women how much space there was in the Electrolux icebox. A large sheet of paper was printed with spaces corresponding to the various shelf areas. This paper was placed on a kitchen table. The actual contents of the prospect's present icebox were emptied onto the diagram. This always showed a surplus of space left in the Electrolux.

There are lots of things *any* salesman can do to make his story interesting. *Motion* is a key to a group of them. This is from *Printers' Ink*:

Ask salesman Byron Foy of De Soto (who happens to be president of that motor car company) about streamlining. Equipping himself with a paper of matches and an ordinary drinking glass, Mr. Foy will proceed as follows:

First he lights a match and then places the match folder about four inches from his mouth, with the flame immediately behind it. He blows. The blaze continues undisturbed. That, he points out, is the way it is with the "old-style" car.

Next, he interposes the drinking glass between his mouth and the lighted match, noting that the glass is fairly well streamlined as to cross-section. He blows again. The flame is immediately extinguished and Mr. Foy sums up the matter with these words: "The air passed around the glass with a minimum of resistance without creating any wind drag such as found on the rear of a car not streamlined."

One smart salesman has a list of his products on the back of his card. He punches the card to indicate the prospect's needs. Percy Whiting tells the story of a bond salesman who would approach a farmer in his barn, say nothing for five minutes; just examine cows. Then, "How would you like to get a cow like this free every year?" That would immediately interest the farmer and the salesman would show him how, by taking money out of the bank and putting it into bonds, the increase would buy a cow a year. This attention to the buyer's interest is so rare that when it is given it stands out like the Washington Monument against the Potomac River. Leaning far ahead into the other fellow's problem is the easiest way to get him with you. We have all seen a vaudeville actor step down from the stage and into the audience. It always creates additional interest. Electrolux does that when salesmen hand a pad to the prospect and let him check off and write in parts of the sales story as it is unfolded.

Showmanship should be applied to every phase of the personal sale: the approach—the sales story—the selling equipment—samples, etc. And work through all five senses—and the emotions.

Use *mystery*. We mentioned how Percy Whiting, selling securities, showed prospects two lists of stocks, each worth $1,000 five years ago, and asked the prospect to pick the list that he would have chosen as the best buy. Current market figures reveal, of course, that Whiting's list showed the greatest appreciations. The bare statement of this fact, without the "Which

is which?" introduction couldn't possibly impress the prospect so definitely. Nor hold his attention.

Simplicity is always important. Avoid the attitude of the waiter who rattles off "huckleberry, raspberry, apple, cocoanut, and peach." That simply muddles. Variety is important, but should be mentioned briefly in passing. The definite assumptive close is the way to an order. *Action!* The Airway Vacuum Cleaner salesman pours the dirt onto the order blank, tells Mrs. Dokes to stir it with a pencil. He then takes the dirt off the blank and asks her, pencil in hand, to sign the order. She does.

A catsup manufacturer ordered his entire force to follow the effective pattern set up by his star salesman. That salesman would enter a grocery store quite incognito. Without a word he would buy two bottles of catsup, one being his own brand. Then, still without introducing himself, he would open the bottles and ask the proprietor to taste each of them. The storekeeper naturally treated him not as a salesman, but as a customer. The taste of the catsup spoke for itself. It brought sales to a close without any sales talk.

The Loose-Wiles Biscuit Company has found that one demonstration is worth 10,000 words. Salesmen are instructed to put packages of crackers in dishpans full of water to show that the package resists water and that the crackers stay crisp. They use magnifying glasses to prove that they are "flakier" than their competitors' products.

In the regular one-pound package of crackers,

Loose-Wiles found that they had more than 130 crackers. They said, "Let's dramatize that—let's say to the dealer, 'You sell all these crackers for 15 cents. You don't believe it?' Then we show him a package some three feet long. We had taken 130 or more crackers and piled them one on top of the other."

G. A. Nichols, now editor of *Printers' Ink*, once sold stoves. When he went to a dealer he didn't ask him, "How would you like to *buy* a carload of stoves?" He said, "How would you like to *sell* a carload of stoves?"

Everyone likes to buy. If things were free, we'd buy constantly. Because buying is a satisfactory experience. Selling consists of properly submitting yourself to the laws of buying. Yet selling labors under high-pressure persuasion instead of guilelessly becoming a process for properly emphasizing the things in a product that are behind that natural buying urge.[1]

[1] Too much has been written on the science of selling. Not enough on the science of buying. If a man wanted to know about women, he would not want to read a book about how men should learn about women, but rather read a book about women. With all the thousands of books on selling, none have been written on buying.

It would be great if we could only see a prospect's mind working. Asserted reasons for purchase or nonpurchase can seldom be trusted. The uncertainties of human response are illustrated in this story of the South:

There was the colored gentleman on election day, who was asked by his employer how he had voted. "Well," he answered, "ah done studied long time over dat, and ah finally votes fo de Demmycrats." "Gracious," responded his employer, "I thought you were a 'dyed-in-the-wool' Republican." "Oh, yas, sah," answered the darky, "but de Republican gemmum he gives me three dollars to vote Republican and den de Demmycrat gemum he gives me two dollars to vote fo his side, so I jes up and vote Demmycratic 'cause dey is de least corrupt."

When a salesman approaches we automatically say "No." Does that seem to contradict the preceding paragraph? Only on the surface. The reason we *say* "No" is because we *know* that it is our only defense. Our only defense for Ye Olde Budget.

In the drivers' room of the Horton Ice Cream Company in New York there is a large mirror imprinted with the words, "This is how you look to the customer." Wouldn't it be great if another mirror told us how our sales story looks to the customer? Curiously enough, the things that make people buy are just the opposite from the things that make people stop buying. If we could only guess what was on a prospect's mind we'd have a sure cue to interest. He tells us in his spare time, in his regular spending of his money on movies and other shows. He *wants* showmanship.

So believe it or not—you're a showman! Every day you put on your own little show, and the extent to which it is a good show and pleases your audience, or prospect, determines your "Box Office." Most of us recognize this. Most of us admire the good showman. However, we frequently hear that there is a certain, subtle, elusive something about showmanship that is impossible to define. It's a gift!

That's not true. Showmanship is a simple, everyday force.

14

SING SOMETHING SIMPLE

THERE was once a telephone lineman who had suffered a broken leg. He was taken to a hospital for treatment. After the leg had been set, a pretty, redheaded nurse asked him how the accident had happened. He enlightened her in the following words:

"You see, lady, it was like this. I was out stringing for the company and I had one ground mole. He was up a big comealong and she was a heavy one. I was pullin' on her and yelled to the mole to give the guy a wrap; instead he threw a sag into her, and that broke my leg."

"I don't quite understand," said the redheaded nurse.

"Neither do I," said the lineman. "The damn fool must have been crazy."

Keep this story always in mind when you are spending any great sum of money on goods, printed matter or speech that somebody else is supposed to understand—to appreciate—to comprehend. Being at the head of the parade is fine, but being an hour ahead of it is bad. The public takes time to absorb. Your mind, when you write copy, is two jumps ahead of each word. A reader is two jumps behind it. The

public mind, as we have suggested perhaps thirty-five times, is amazingly simple. Thought is difficult. Ask even the average man whether Mickey Mouse is a cat or a dog. You'll get an answer! Only one in ten will remind you that he's neither.

Ruthrauff and Ryan, an advertising agency, summed it up in the title of a booklet—*Slow Down the Bandwagon, the Elephants Can't Keep Up with the Parade.* Scientific builders of radio programs have the hardest job persuading radio artists *not* to sing new songs. True, if no one sang the new songs, there'd be none—but the safest policy for any individual program, most of the time, is to follow the strategy of the clothing merchant who with a small store jammed in between two spectacular sales put out his sign, "Main Entrance."

Harry Overstreet analyzes the safe position for you in his keen analysis of safe, but dumb, political speeches:

> How does one get that way? Political stump speakers are apt to be the star performers with clichés. Is it because they have grown so used to appealing to the least common denominator of the crowd intelligence that their own intelligence has ceased to function? We know that a *subtle thought, an unusual proposal, a new idea, has a poor chance to "get across" in a large political meeting.* For the most part, *only platitudes win applause.* Only the accustomed *clap-trap appeals.*

Consider!—When they used to put movie dialogue on silent screens, do you remember how long they kept the words on the screen? You frequently sat

there and said to yourself, "Come on, there, I've finished that long ago."

Take your cue from the show business. What shows succeed? Ones with obscure plots? No. The World's Fair thrived on the "cafeteria" atmosphere of selecting whatever entertainment you wanted. And that meant the daring auto races and the "live power" animals. The shows with the widest appeal are those with the simplest story. Opera survives because its great music and plots are so simple. Its simplicity saves its boredom. Adults in the mass—even opera audiences—think slowly when at all. And are childlike. At the Fair, National Carbon's Freddie Flash pictures for kids were packed with adults. Circuses, ball games, the movies, they don't tax the imagination. *Green Pastures* ran for five years not only because of its superb acting, but because the theme was so devastatingly simple. Dying and going to heaven! "Gangway foh de Lawd God Jehovah" is said to be the greatest entrance cue in the history of the theater.

That's what keeps the odds always against the experts in every line. Arthur Schwartz, who made $50,000 on the popularity of one musical score, wrote many tunes that nobody likes. Elmer Rice wrote *On Trial* and *Street Scene*. Possibly half a million people saw these shows and liked them. He also wrote *Judgment Day*. Did you see it? No. Only 450 people saw it—and *they* were sorry. The show was a flop. Each year *Variety* tabulates the Broadway and Hollywood hits and flops. The critics were pretty

bad as prophets—the producers were worse. While film critics averaged 8 out of 10 right, this only counts for a net 40 per cent, since 5 out of 10 could probably be scored with eyes closed. Ninety-five plays flopped and 25 made money—some, very little money. And many more Broadway shows would flop were it not for their "tryouts" in the hinterland of Newark and points west.

John Willys, to take a less risky line, sold five million cars. Then he tried a radical car. It flopped. There were years of shrewd experience and millions of capital behind the car. Willys thought he had a winner. At one auto show, people were asked which car was the worst buy on the floor: 42 per cent of the people (not including the maker) voted for one car. The Art Directors Club in New York polled its memberships—and the public—on the "public appeal" of a group of pictures. Do you think the poll tallied with a public poll at Macy's? Not by nine places! The judgment of experts, even in their own specialties, is frequently wrong. And the judgment of executives even more wrong. Obviously there must be some protection for a sound businessman. There is. Loew and Belasco used it wisely. George Whelan used it. Woolworth used it. But most of us are too vain and shiftless to check by actual count to the inevitable public verdict.

You may be surprised when you find out what people think of your product.[1] American Telephone and

[1] Many popular conceptions are completely erroneous. Curiously enough, even Hawaiians don't prefer Hawaiian music. "Sweet" dance music outpulled it by a narrow margin in a recent poll.

Telegraph was when it asked people to guess the cost of long-distance phone calls from the World's Fair to their home towns. Seventy-six per cent of the guesses were too high. Almost a third were twice the actual figure. The average guess was nearly 174 per cent of the actual rate.

	Number		*Average Per Cent Higher Than Actual Rate*	
Day Rate Guesses: made by men	210		55	
" " " " " women	359		74	
" " Total		569		67
Night Rate Guesses: made by men	91		56	
" " " " " women	144		109	
" " Total		235		88
Total guesses on rates		804		74

In business, next to being right the best thing is to find out you're wrong before you've gone too far. But few people will go to the trouble of checking up on themselves. Next to physical pain, the one thing we seem to want most to avoid is to be called wrong. Given their choice, too many executives would rather be wrong and thought right than be right and thought wrong.

Here's a typical set of responses from tests of two pieces of copy in three cities of various sizes. Figures show increase in per cent of sales.[2]

	City 1 Per Cent	*City 2 Per Cent*	*City 3 Per Cent*	*Average Per Cent*
Copy A.....	210	220	300	240
Copy B.....	90	91	180	127

[2] These tested ads were offered to dealers with a story on their "tested" background. Dealers were quick to use them.

Advertising men have shown time and time again that they can't pick the good ads from the bad ones. I (zk) ran a series of copy tests in *Printers' Ink* for 25 months under the title of "Can You Pick the Winner?" Each month a different advertiser provided a set of two advertisements, both of which had run under reasonably comparable conditions. One was a "winner"; one was a "loser." The difference in measured response was never less than 100 per cent and sometimes as much as 1,000 per cent. They averaged at 300 per cent difference. Yet most ad-men couldn't pick the winners.

The president of a midwestern advertising club wrote me (zk) for a set of proofs, saying that his club wanted to build a meeting around a study of these ads. I wrote him that I'd send the proofs if he'd give me a box score report of the ballots. He did. Thirty-five men voted 10 times—a total of 350 selections. They averaged 40 per cent right, or just 10 per cent worse than if they had picked blindfolded. This isn't quite as good as the 1,000 members of fourteen professional advertising clubs that picked 56 per cent out of Carrol Rheinstrom's eleven trial pairs.

Moral: stay home and hide under the bed?

No! But don't go out unless you know where you are going—and whether the place is still there!

Even autopsies are better than nothing, as illustrated by the little restaurant proprietor who daily counted the newspapers left by patrons to see which they actually read. Or better still, Calvert Maryland

sending Ex-Reporter Walter J. Gold to the Army-Navy game to tabulate brand names on empty whisky flasks.

Running any sort of promotion whatever, without constantly testing it, is just about as dumb as a life insurance company would be in setting premiums without referring to the mortality rate tables. The reactions of people in masses are just as certain as the probability that seven out of every million people will die while you are reading this paragraph. Drifting up a river on ebb tide is easier than trying to force your way against known (but uncharted) currents of human behavior.

Use a Tryout

Research involves a technique far too complicated to cover here. It has reached its peak in the mail-order and direct-mail fields, and is gradually being adapted to use in other media. It is making rapid strides in radio—in newspapers and magazines. Display people are beginning to clock passers-by—to get the "stop-power of displays." Handmade sample displays are being tested in key windows.

Leo Nejelski of Swift and Company told the delegates to a packaging exposition that his company had been successful in testing new packages.

Testing Outdoor

There has been a noticeable lack of effort made to introduce testing in outdoor advertising. There are two easy ways to do it: from sketches and from

actually posting in test areas. The first way would involve the showing of various sketches simultaneously to sample audiences—testing their memory response an hour or two later. This would involve the development of a complicated technique, but would be worth many times the cost to advertisers who spend from $50,000 to $100,000 on a single poster. Actual posting in test areas could be accomplished inexpensively. Five days later, in each town, investigators could test the impressions made per thousand people. Definite ratings would thus be obtained.

Testing Radio

Telephone surveys tell you how good or bad your radio show is. C. E. Hooper told the Chicago Ad Club:

"As a result of 80,000 telephone calls made during the past month, we find that there are currently eight radio advertisers who are impressing their product names upon the consciousness of as much as 90 per cent of their 'program audibility.' There is one which is averaging only 18 per cent."

Testing Face-to-Face Selling

Few retailers will go to the trouble to check the value of their own clerks' selling sentences. Dr. Elmer Wheeler, whose "Tested Sentences" have been tried on 5,000,000 retail customers, tells us it is entirely possible to sell more than four out of every ten people properly addressed.

"The kind the *Indians* wear, sonny!" for example, jumped kids' sales from one in twenty to eight

in twenty. "Have you tried a *scientific* toothbrush?" sold out three out of four stores in less than a week.

After many successive failures to sell a masculine deodorant, a clerk put it on the counter with a sign "For *Active* Men"—and six men out of ten stopped to inquire.[3]

Two sales sentences—simple and standardized—taught to retail clerks—increased department-store sales of Barbasol 300 per cent. One tested sales sentence sold four out of every ten children, where only one in twenty had bought before. Selling tennis rackets, a rightly chosen sales sentence worked 19 times out of every hundred; golf balls, 21 times; malted milk, 28 times.

[3] From *Word Magic*, a five-reel training movie based on "*Tested Sentences That Sell*, by Wheeler."

15

WILL YOU?

SEVERAL men have voiced a grave warning in connection with the dangers of our use of the word "showmanship" in addressing a conservative business community. Nothing, they tell us, will ease a man out of a responsible management and financial group faster than a reputation for being a "showman."

One first-class showman confesses that when dealing with his management he conceals every trace of his sales tactics. He wears "steel-faced suits, plain ties, doesn't cross his legs, shows no enthusiasm, uses no adjectives." This strategy, unfortunately, is 100 per cent smart. Financial management minds *are* apathetic to the popular showman's conceptions. They don't realize that showmanship is deeper by far than the tricks it has so far been chiefly known by. It's a mistake to judge the *dollar value* of commercial showmanship by the failures of the men who tried to *make dollars* out of showmanship.

Few of these business introverts, therefore, have realized that every ledger page must have a human being's name at the head of it. And that that buyer's name seldom gets there without some skillful sales assistance. Fred Cole points out:

"A certain type of individual is necessary to breathe life into such a program. There are two types of showmen: the born showman and the analytical showman.

"Roxy was a born showman. Nobody could make a dime from him because he was utterly devoid of business sense. He invested more in ventures than he could hope to get out, because his only interest was in creating a spectacle. Even our great Barnum was less than a smart business man, but as we know, there is a small army of people who are clever enough to adapt the principles of Roxy or Barnum or any other born showman, and still keep their feet on the ground.

"I offer this to controvert the opinion that management frequently has that showmen are all a bit balmy. This opinion is largely based on personal idiosyncrasies of the natural-born showman. Conversely, a cold-blooded, analytical type of showman might easily be capable of putting on a circus during business hours yet in his thoughts and reasoning be as conservative as the treasurer of the First National Bank."

Let's risk the unsympathetic disapproval and look at showmanship a bit more broadly. As Elbert Hubbard said of art, showmanship is "not a thing; it is just a best way of doing everything."

Showmanship is everywhere. The great names that come down through history all carry with them a picturesque image of the influence of showmanship. As Harry Alexander says:

"Showmanship is on the air; showmanship is in the air; showmanship is in offices; showmanship holds the cards; you have the thrills, laughter, tears, fun, romance out of showmanship."

Everywhere. You find showmanship in politics with more than a thousand news items going out of the Federal Departments at Washington every day.

You find it in war when nations drop reams of leaflets behind the enemy lines—fake editions of enemy newspapers, even, pointing out the hopelessness of the odds against the fighters. Pi Tau Pi Fraternity used showmanship to build interest in its national Jumbo Convention (Bigger and Better than Ever) when they sent out on a national tour a six-foot rolled scroll showing an elephant superimposed on a map of the United States. Members in each chapter who were planning to come to the convention were asked to write their autographs on the map in the blank space nearest their home town. Cleveland sold the American Legion the idea of coming there for the 1936 convention by sending out 75,000 pieces of printed material and finally sending a dirigible with underslung neon signs to hover over the 1935 convention to maintain interest. This book has demonstrated, we hope, that no product or service is so "dry" as to be barren of the seeds from which a showman's presentation can be developed.

A number of you who read this book will nevertheless disregard all our suggestions in the standard nonshowmanship fashion, "I can't use that sort of stuff! All right for other companies, but not for me." The big companies will say that it is all right for the small ones. The small-time fellow will say that it is fine for the big city chap. The oil-burner man will say that it is all right for the mouthwash people. The house-to-house man will say it's all right for the department-store fellow.

The beverage salesman, obviously, has no stream-

lined product to demonstrate by scratching matches and juggling glasses of water. And the car salesman, of course, can't drink his product, as the Flyosan salesman did to show it couldn't hurt human beings. The insurance man says his service, unlike Balsa wood, is too intangible to place on a table fashioned into a mallet to prove how light its substance. And the maker of raw materials points out it's easy for sellers of intangibles to use showmanship because they don't deal in merchandise. Each of them, while contradicting the general principle, is confirming its existence by using in his business the very things that the men in the other businesses say won't work! Each skeptic will find, perhaps, in a next-door building some obvious example that proves he is wrong. A casketmaker even can use showmanship. A casketmaker dropped one of his sealed boxes in a nearby lake at the start of a two-day convention; hauled it out at the end to show his men how dry the insides were.

Even so dull a thing as a magazine's circulation figure can be made to sparkle with interest. Carroll Rheinstrom, when promotion manager of Macfadden's *Liberty*, had a boy carry two piles of magazines into a prospect's office. "There," he said, pointing to the large pile of his own magazines, "are the copies of *Liberty* that go into homes for your dollar. And there"—pointing to a smaller stack of a competitor's magazines—"are the copies of the other magazine that you get for the same dollar."

Showmanship needs no apology. It is universal.

No subject is too dry, no business function too self-sufficient to derive benefits from better showmanship. Bernard Shaw once wrote of Napoleon:

> He had a clear, realistic knowledge of human nature in public affairs—imagination without illusions—keen dramatic faculty extremely clever at playing upon people with the arts of the actor and the stage manager.

Anything that affects people needs the showman's point of view. John Theis has applied showmanship in the demonstration of cost accounting. One of his breakdowns of the cost elements of the baking business was a 9-foot loaf of bread, the largest ever baked. The loaf ran to 108 inches with 100 inches representing sales and the extra 8 inches representing waste from stale returns. His loaf was pulled apart in front of his audience. Behind the loaf as it was torn apart were revealed figures explaining cost elements. If a C.P.A. can use showmanship, so can you.

You are, in fact, the answer to your own problem.

Dale Carnegie's book on public speaking has a chapter on "How to Keep the Audience Awake." The answer is summed up in one sentence, "Stick a pin in the speaker." To keep your merchandising audience awake—stick in your own pin. The next time you wonder why the public doesn't pursue your product, consider the title of one of Bill Burrus' famous talks on sales managing. He calls it "What's Wrong with My Salesmen—or Can It Be Me?" Try sticking a hatpin into your advertising sometime.

You have by now noticed, we hope, that there are two kinds of showmanship. Pure and applied. The Macy Parade is an example of applied showmanship. It sells toys. Sweeney's horse shoe is applied—it sells real estate. The old medicine man played his banjo to get the crowd. The plan still works. Hearn's presents grand opera in the store auditorium. People come to hear the music. They stay to buy goods.

But the progress in the use of real showmanship is to be found in the gradual wane of the use of pure showmanship—an extra news force—like Hearn's Grand Opera and the increase in the applied brand, like Macy's.[1]

Christopher Morley in *Human Being* writes: "A store with imagination puts on every day a new and astonishing performance, collaborated between itself and its public . . . discovering that a department store is not just an enormous pushcart, but a kind of theater."

But people shrewd enough to make profitable customers and stores keen enough to cultivate only profitable customers alike recognize that a store is primarily a place to buy things, only incidentally a place for entertainment. But, as Ken Collins says he wouldn't exhibit Amos 'n' Andy without some kind of *merchandise* tie-up, be it as small as a $0.23 toy

[1] The slender line that can separate pure showmanship from the *applied* variety was demonstrated at the World's Fair when exhibitors suddenly found they could sell their samples. People were glad to pay for Aunt Jemima's pancakes, for a million and a half Chrsyler ash trays. Even at the comparatively high price of $1.80, Heinz sold thousands of Treasure Chests in a few weeks.

taxicab! This *application* of showmanship, we repeat, is the secret of success.

You can trace for yourself this development from pure to applied. Even the Goodrich Silver Fleet, which paid for itself several times over in goodwill and newspaper publicity, was merchandised in every town that it visited. The fleet would break up, the Lincoln car going to the Lincoln showroom, other cars similarly. The puncture-proof feature of the Goodrich inner tube was exploited with a Spike-driving Contest among kids. Armour sent one of the first airplanes from coast to coast to push a grape juice. But, more recently, when the Des Moines *Register* bought a newfangled autogiro, it *applied* its investment by using it to take up victorious winners in carrier boys' contests. That's been a trend. It has quite a way to go.

For example, Mollé broadcast a series of sidewalk interviews—asked such questions as "How many legs has an octogenarian?" This pulled big radio audiences, but Mollé failed logically to extend this five-star feature by giving away the correct answers with a tube of Mollé.

A company that supplied building material for a World's Fair building arranged to have this building torn down last—took photos and advertised that they had to dynamite the building to remove it. Thus emphasizing the structural strength of its product. Thus, too, only a few miles from the stockyards an advertiser squeezes profit out of the pig's squeal—getting a newspaper publicity story out of the

World's Fair's dying gasp. Chrysler, too, used *applied* showmanship when he stood an elephant on the roof of a car to show the strength of the roof.

Ford, on the other hand, was not so practical in his recent broadcast of the World Series. It may have been worth $100,000 to Mr. Ford to broadcast a World Series with no mention of any virtues of his car. But it may be a frightfully dangerous precedent for any other advertiser to follow blindly. Even if not pointed directly at sales, every gesture of showmanship can at least have a sales "touch." In contrast with Mr. Ford, Chevrolet gave as a permanent trophy to every boy who entered the soapbox derby a steel helmet. What boy didn't show it to his father—who, in turn, saw inscribed thereon words about "Turret Top—Fisher Body—One-Piece Steel Safety Unit." A General Tire dealer, instead of using an ordinary good luck piece, uses a dime-size one to dramatize his tire safety story, "Stops on a Dime."

This application of showmanship is the secret of its success. Otherwise it's mostly theory. Picture Washington at Valley Forge, sitting at a desk, studying the thermometer, and sending out pep letters saying that the British would probably go home in the spring! It reminds us of the ship's parrot watching a magician perform at the show in the salon. In the midst of the show a boiler exploded, destroying the ship. The parrot landed on one of the few floating remains of the boat, and cocking his head, he said, "Very very clever!"

But unprofitable.

Shakespeare said, "The play's the thing." Some cynic might observe that modern business has knocked the "l" out of Shakespeare. So be it! Drop the letter "l." You then have a strictly modern saga of success: "The *pay's* the thing." Does showmanship pay? On with the show—yes, if the public wants it. Does the public want showmanship in its advertising?

Watch your audience watch your show. If your audience walks out on you, your show is wrong. Mind the coupons. The critics don't count. The coupons do.

When we say that the public is sold on showmanship, we mean the public is sold millions of products every day by showmanship. Ask people why they go to the movies; they can't tell you. Ask them what makes them buy merchandise; they can't tell you that either. It is always just about the same thing. It is surprising how little you can get along with if you want to, or have to. Yet we manufacture billions of dollars' worth of wants, simply by touching lightly the right keys of desire. And the formula is the same for showmanship in business as it is in show business.

What we need is a combination of candor and Cantor. Truth in advertising needn't fly out the window when showmanship comes in. There is a far-flung notion that in order to advertise a product in anything but the most stereotyped fashion you have to reach down into the wildest stretches of commer-

cially immoral imagination for a copy theme. You don't. You can be right and still be president!

What's Ahead?

There's more good showmanship ahead than we ever dreamt of. Fifty thousand patents will be issued again next year and many times that many selling ideas will be conceived and executed. Ideas that are conceived from a showman's point of view of pleasing the public will be gratefully received—somewhere—and bring honor and cash to some originators. You still will be reading the trade papers and saying from time to time, "Gosh, why didn't we think of that before?"

Yet thousands of things are still to be done. A big food company maintains a test kitchen in an office building. Thousands of women come to it—stand gaping, pressing their noses against the glass wall that acts as a curtain. Why doesn't this food company make a film of this kitchen and show it to millions of women?

Why did it take ten years for someone to make a jar top so that it could be used as an ash tray? Or for Chevrolet to realize that the soapbox derby could be made an international event? Why did it take ten years to put the "March of Time" into the movies? Now a dress is made with a watch built into it; and a soap company will have Western Union install a dispenser in your bathroom for 10 cents. Why did it take ten years for a hotel to offer an "Overnite Club" to suburbans—an emergency

service such as the Lexington offers? A member who misses his train, enters the hotel, shows his membership card to the registration clerk, is assigned the room of his choice like any other guest and is issued, without charge, an overnight kit containing pajamas, toothbrush, toothpaste, hairbrush, comb and a pair of crepe slippers, all attractively packaged. What's next?

There's only one place for showmanship to stop, and that's when it ceases to pay its way.

It may not be, in any precise sense, the function of the New York *Daily News* to run a dancing or ice-skating contest, but as long as it pays they'll keep it up. It may seem like a far cry for a chain of drugstores to take 10,000 kids to a ball game, but Cunningham can show you that it pays.

Business seems to be getting a great deal more human. But there's still a deal further to go. Business seems to begin to recognize the need for knowing what the public wants. Probably the next step will be to know why the public wants it. And that inevitably will bring us all nearer and nearer to the thing the public always craves—a good show.

Too much showmanship? Don't let it bother you. As the old train dispatcher said to the lady when she asked, "When does the last train go to New York?" His answer was, "You should live so long!" Too much showmanship? Not in your day. And even if there is, this book will scarcely be to blame. If a book like this sells 5,000 copies,[2] the publisher blesses the

[2] "Blessings," Harpers, February, 1938.

day he met the authors. If every one of our readers forthwith becomes an expert showman—there will still scarcely be a dent. There are 18,508 movie houses in this land. Who will ever notice 5,000 showmen? Anyway, half our buyers won't read the whole book—half the readers won't understand it—and most of the remainder won't do anything about it.

WILL YOU?

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